UNITED
NATIONS

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women

Distr.
GENERAL

CEDAW/C/5/Add.63
20 February 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women (CEDAW)

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports of States parties

GUYANA

V.90-83740

INTRODUCTION

1. Guyana became an independent nation in May 1966. During the period 1950 - 1966, women were actively involved in mass movements to remove British Colonialism and provide Guyanese with the mandate to control their own destiny.

2. During that decade and a half, women's role in the political life of the country became manifest and they extended their sphere of interest from social and community work to active participation in the political life of the country.

3. The heightening of women's political consciousness linked the struggle for political independence with awareness of their right to economic and social equality. This awareness led them to recognise that the struggle for their emancipation was linked to the eradication of colonialism.

4. Women's active participation in the struggle for independence in 1966 and Republican status in 1970 earned them recognition of their right to benefit from the economic and social progress which accrued after independence. On assuming independence the Government of Guyana demonstrated tangibly its adherence to the principle of equality of opportunity and economic and social justice for all Guyanese.

5. This adherence to equality is enshrined in the 1980 Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, of which Article 40 (1) Chapter III states:

> Every person in Guyana is entitled to the basic right to a happy, creative and productive life, free from hunger, disease, ignorance and want. That right includes the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, the right, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest, to each and all of the following, namely -
>
> (a) life, liberty, security of the person and the protection of the law;
> (b) freedom of conscience, of expression and of assembly and association; and
> (c) protection for the privacy of his home and other property and from
> (d) deprivation of property without compensation.

6. In the immediate post-independence period, the government was faced with major tasks arising from the economic and social injustices inherent in the colonial system.

7. Some of these tasks were related to the re-organization of the economic base of the society particularly in the major productive sectors, such as the sugar and bauxite industries, which were owned by foreign companies and multinational corporations. In addition, there was need to re-organize industrial undertakings, many of which were owned by private entrepreneurs, both local and foreign, to make them more responsive to developmental needs.

8. Changes were also made in the delivery of social services, through the introduction of free education for all from nursery to university level, the provision of free medical services, extended to the rural areas, and a housing programme utilising the co-operative, self-help and self-reliant mechanisms.

9. With the introduction of the new system of Local Democracy in 1980, a new process of decentralisation began. Ten Regional Democratic Councils were established to administer the affairs of the entire country. These were entrusted with the responsibility for planning, monitoring and co-ordinating the regional development programmes in each region.

10. The development programmes of these regions are ultimately co-ordinated by the National State Planning Commission.

11. The Regional System is integrally linked to the National Assembly and other decision-making bodies by the national electoral process. Each region receives an annual budgetary allocation from the Central Government, but has the authority to establish projects to generate additional financial resources.

12. Upon its advent to office the Government declared its adherence to the socialist ideology and placed emphasis on the principle of Co-operativism as the unifying and motivating force for the development of Guyana.

13. Article 16 of 1980 Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana states:

> Co-operativism in practice shall be the dynamic principle of socialist transformation and shall pervade and inform all interrelationships in the society. Co-operativism is rooted in the historical experience of the people, is based on self-reliance, is capable of releasing the productive energies of the people, and is a unifying principle in the total development of the nation.

14. When in 1970, Guyana assumed Republican Status, the Government emphasised its commitment to the principles of non-alignment and national self-reliance.

15. Much emphasis was placed, too, on maximum utilisation of the country's natural resources, particularly its agricultural potential, as a mechanism for ensuring food and nutritional self-sufficiency.

16. With an area of 216,00 square kilometres and population of just under 800,000 people, it was clear to Government and people of Guyana that a developing country such as Guyana, had to utilise its human resources as fully as possible if it was to benefit from political freedom and move to economic independence. It is against this background that women are accorded full opportunity to participate in the political, economic and social life of the country.

17. Guyana as part of a world community which was becoming increasingly aware of practices of discrimination in many areas could not be insulated against inherent prejudices based on class or gender considerations or socio-cultural attitudes which perpetuated the notion that women were inferior to men. However, through a process of continuing education and changes in the general social climate and through political, economic and structural transformations in the country, a more enlightened approach to this age-old problem was gradually induced.

18. Developments in education have facilitated women's ability to function at different levels of the governmental and political administration. Policies which formerly hindered women's advancement in public life were changed and women who had hitherto been limited to the fields of domestic activities, teaching and nursing entered in larger numbers the field of local and central government, trade unions and politics. They also took advantage of new career opportunities in military and para-military institutions established for the defence of the newly independent state.

19. The introduction of free health services increased women's life span and the introduction of the National Insurance Scheme permit more women to reconcile family responsibilities with work and social activities. In return for contributions to this scheme women in the labour force receive sickness, maternity and pension benefits.

20. Inequalities inherent in the colonial legal system were discovered by groups of women whose consciousness of social injustice was increasingly being raised. These were brought to the attention of the relevant authorities and are even now being addressed

in the Equal Rights Bill tabled in the National Assembly.

21. An examination of the steps taken to promote legal equality for women in all spheres of political, economic and social life shows that many changes were made before and during the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985). Some of these changes are as follows:

- 1904 Separate property rights were conferred on women.

- 1928 Women who owned property which had a certain financial value were enfranchised for the first time.

- 1945 Women were eligible to sit in the Legislative Council.

- 1953 Universal Adult Suffrage was granted to men and women, 21 years and over.

- 1961 Women were eligible for jury service.

- 1976 Presentation in Parliament of a State Paper on Equality for Women.

- 1980 Enshrinement of the principle of equality for women under Article 29 of the 1980 Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

- 1980 Signing and ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

22. Special measures were taken to accelerate the work of voluntary nongovernmental women's organizations in Guyana. In Guyana, there are about forty non-governmental women's organizations and their spheres res of activity represent a wide cross section of interests - political, economic, cultural, educational and religious and these were encouraged to come together under an umbrella national non-governmental organization known as the Conference on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana (CASWIG). Its membership comprises affiliated non-governmental women's organizations.

23. One of its affiliates, the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement (WRSM) is an arm of the governing Party with nationwide branches. One of its guiding principles is that all Guyanese should be guaranteed the opportunity to work for and share in the political, economic and social life of the country. Another affiliate, the Federation of Women's Institutes a rural women's organization also with country wide branches aims at providing women with skills-training in the areas of agriculture, food-processing, catering and handicraft to equip them for income-generation. Many women who have acquired skills through the Women's Institutes have established cottage industries.

24. The Women's Advisory Council of the Trades Union Congress is another affiliate one of whose important objectives is to preserve the rights of women workers and to ensure their protection in the workplace.

25. There is a small group of organizations not affiliated to CASWIG. These include the arms of some political parties.

26. In 1981, the Women's Affairs Bureau was established by Government to co-ordinate, monitor and systematically promote the integration of women in development.

27. At the national level measures have been taken to promote and ensure the full development and advancement of women and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by way of the country's constitution.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 1:

28. Article 40 (1) of Chapter III of the 1980 Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana guarantees to each person in Guyana fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest.

29. Guarantees are built into the Constitution to afford protection of all fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual; they are, however, subject to limitations designed to ensure that the enjoyment of such does not prejudice the rights and freedoms of others or the public interest.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 2:

30. The condemnation of discrimination against women in all its forms is supported by the Government of Guyana. The principles of equality of men and women are enshrined in the 1980 Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana which came into force on the 6th October, 1980. Under Article 29:

> Women and men have equal rights and the same legal status in all spheres of political, economic and social life. All forms of discrimination against women on the basis of their sex are illegal. The exercise of women's rights is ensured by according women equal access with men to academic, vocational and professional training, equal opportunities in employment, remuneration and promotion, and in social, political and cultural activity, by special labour and health protection measures for women, by providing conditions enabling mothers to work, and by legal protection and material and moral support for mothers and children, including paid leave and other benefits for mothers and expectant mothers.

31. In 1981 in pursuance of this principle embodied in the Constitution a Committee headed by the first woman to be made a judge in Guyana was established to recommend amendments to the Laws of Guyana to give effect to Article 29 (Equality for Women) and Article 30 (Equality for children born out of wedlock) of the Constitution.

32. The Committee examined the Laws of Guyana for traces of discrimination and also took into consideration recommendations submitted by representatives of women's organizations. The report of the Committee contained recommendations for amendments to twenty-three Acts* and subsidiary legislation* in fifteen areas. The Laws recommended for amendment include those relating to marriage, divorce, maintenance, guardianship and custody of children whether born in wedlock or not and employment of women in factories.

33. A programme of phased legislation has been worked out for implementation of these recommendations over the next few years. Specific acts nave been identified to be dealt with on a priority basis.

34. This programme is being monitored by a special Committee established by Government under the aegis of the Women's affairs Bureau, the governmental mechanism for the integration of women in development.

35. The State Paper on Equality for Women which was presented in Parliament in January 1976 by the late President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Cde Linden F.S. Burnham, O.E., S.C., then Prime Minister, listed a number of areas within the Laws of Guyana that still showed traces of discrimination in terms of conditions for

---

* See Appendix I

working women.

36. This State Paper predates the adoption of the Convention but coincides with and is an expansion of article I of Part I of the Convention. article 29 of Chapter II of the Constitution reinforces the State Paper.

37. Article 29 of the Constitution provides for equality between the sexes. The government, to give effect to this principle, has enacted certain bills in Parliament and has amended laws of Guyana which discriminated against women.

38. Again, under Section 7 (I) of the Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana Act 1980 existing laws shall continue in force as if made in pursuance of the Constitution but shall be constructed with such modifications, adaptations, qualifications and exemptions as may be necessary to bring them into conformity with the Act. It must be pointed out also that, existing laws include the common law as well.

39. With regard to discriminatory customs and practices, it is difficult to institute legislation to ensure their removal. The religious, social and sociological mores of the people do not necessarily reflect overt signs of discrimination that in any way contravene legislation. The discrimination is often more subtle and fosters reluctance to participate in certain areas of activity which have always been dominated by men. Changes in attitudes are heavily dependent on a number of factors that cannot be controlled. Much must be done by influential groups, the education system and other Government Agencies to institute the kinds of social changes in beliefs that will permit people to reassess their attitudes and encourage mental adaptation to complete equality.

40. The Constitution proclaims equal rights for women and these are guaranteed by various Articles which also provide protection in instances of discrimination.

41. Reciprocally national penal provisions are usually dispensed without discrimination against either sex. If there are traces of discrimination still existing in this respect it is in favour of women.

42. Under Article 42 (I) of the Constitution both male and female citizens can transmit their citizenship to their spouses.

43. Under Section 4 of the Guyana Citizenship Act, Chapter 14:01 transmission of citizenship is not automatic but depends on the application of a person and certain criteria have to be met. The granting of citizenship is also subject to the discretion of the Minister.

44. Since both male and female citizens can transmit their citizenship to their spouses there is no discrimination against any citizen due to his or her sex. To grant to her husband citizenship a woman has to voluntarily make an application to the Minister; therefore, in this way her husband's citizenship is not forced upon her or her citizenship is not changed automatically.

45. Women have equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children. Under Article 44 of Chapter IV of 198O Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana a child born outside Guyana after the commencement of this Constitution becomes a citizen at the date of his birth if at that date his father or his mother is a citizen of Guyana.

46. Article 43 of the Constitution states:

> Every person born in Guyana after the commencement of this Constitution shall become a citizen of Guyana at the date of his birth:
>
> Provided that a person shall not become a citizen of Guyana by virtue of this Article

if at the time of his birth -

his father or his mother possesses such immunity from suit and legal process as is accorded to an envoy of a foreign sovereign power accredited to Guyana and neither of them is a citizen of Guyana; or

his father or his mother is an enemy alien and the birth occurs in a place then under occupation by the enemy.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 3:

47. The concerns underlying this Article of the Convention centre around women's enjoyment and full participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country as one of their fundamental rights.

48. Article 29 (I) of the Constitution gives the State's position on Equality for Women.

49. Women and men have equal rights and the same legal status in all spheres of political, economic and social life. All forms of discrimination against women on the basis of their sex are illegal.

50. As was stated under Implementation of Article 2 of this document, the State Paper on Equality of Women (1976) identified measures to be taken to remove discriminatory laws against women, and these are now being passed through the National Assembly in phases.

51. Certain appropriate measures have been taken at various levels to indicate Government's intent to give meaning to Article 29 of the Constitution. At the Governmental level, administrative measures have been taken to ensure, employment of women in areas which were hitherto denied them, in some cases due to their - sex or marital status. For example:

(1) Married women are eligible for recruitment, to permanent pensionable positions in the Public Service, on the same basis as men - effected in 1977.
(2) Women are also eligible for employment in the Postal Service and for entry into institutions which were previously male-oriented effected in 1977.

52. In the military and para-military organization parity was given to the employment of women.

1953 - the State Police Force
1966 - the Guyana Defence Force
1972 - the Guyana National Service
1976 - the Guyana People's Militia

53. When all educational institutions became co-educational in 1976, all Apprenticeship Schemes, and Technical and Vocational Institutions opened their programmes to women and young girls. It must be noted that restrictions had not been placed on women's participation at some of these institutions, but customs and practice militated against their seeking access to technical and vocational institutions.

54. Prior to the advent of free education and co-education in 1976, special measures were taken to accord women accessibility to vocational and technical schools and to ensure their attendance at institutions to which they were not denied access, but at which they were not attending for one reason or another.

Guyana Industrial Training Centre -1968
Government Technical Institute

Georgetown	-1969
Guyana Sugar Corporation/Trade School	-1974
Guyana National Engineering Corporation Apprenticeship Training School	- 1977
Guyana School of Agriculture	- 1976
Guyana Mining Enterprise (Trade School)	- 1979

- The removal of the discriminatory qualification against women in relation to Pension rights from the Guyana Sugar and Trading Enterprises Pension Scheme (STEPS) for employees of the Guyana Sugar Corporation. Before 1978 - Workers in the pensionable categories became eligible for membership as follows:

(i) At 21 years together with a minimum of 3 years adult service for males, and 5 years adult service for females.

(ii) At the age of 27 years (automatically) for males and females.

55. Since January 1, 1978, condition (i) above has been amended to read "At age 21 years together with a minimum of 3 years adult service (for both males and females)".

56. In addition with respect to remuneration in the sugar industry, before 1976, a difference existed only in respect of unskilled time-rated workers, where males enjoyed a higher rate of pay than females. Since 1976, this has changed.

57. In the area of training for young men and women at the apprenticeship level, prior to 1974, girls were not admitted to the apprenticeship Training Centre of the Guyana Sugar Corporation which was established in 1968.

58. With the nationalisation of expatriate companies, Guyana Mining Enterprise (GUYMINE) formerly Demerara Bauxite Company Limited, training at the Trade School became accessible to young girls, who gained entry for the first time in 1979.

59. Non-Governmental Organizations have championed the cause of women over the years and by their actions have been able to draw attention to areas of discrimination.

60. These Organizations are involved in programmes of training in traditional and non-traditional fields that provide an economic base and enable women to cope with economic and social changes in society. Special orientation sessions are organized to prepare and equip women for entry to work in non-traditional fields, for example, employment in National Guard Service, an institution responsible for the security of State buildings.

61. With respect to the overall guarantees of Article 3 of the Convention it can be said that:

POLITICALLY - Women in Guyana are free to associate with and canvass for political parties of their choice. Women hold senior positions in main political parties in Guyana.

SOCIALLY - Women are oriented to social change through the efforts of Governmental and non-Governmental Agencies that provide consciousness - raising and family life education programmes.

ECONOMICALLY - Access to employment for women on equal basis with men has provided them with an economic base that does not necessitate complete.reliance and dependence on a male counterpart. There are many areas in which women can now seek employment or self-employment some of which were hetherto denied them or in which their participation was minimal.

CULTURALLY - Wider access to education has allowed women to be able to take a greater part and interest in the cultural life of the nation. It has also allowed women to discover latent talents in the performing and creative arts. These factors give reality to Article 40 of the Constitution which guarantees to each person fundamental rights and freedoms whatever his/her race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, but subject to the respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for public interest.

62. Some appropriate administrative and legal measures have. been taken to give meaning to Articles embodied in the Constitution, there are still some areas to be addressed.

63. It is vital also that women be given appropriate preparation for participation in all aspects of national development. This preparation should be the responsibility of all agencies, governmental and non-governmental.

64. The Women's Affairs Bureau is working with the State Planning Commission and other sectoral agencies and the Regional Democratic Councils to formulate a National Plan and Regional Plans to increase women's participation in development programmes at the Regional and National levels.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 4:

65. As stated under Implementation of Article 3 of the Convention, the Government of Guyana has taken legislative measures to redefine policies and give support to organizations which function in the interest of women to accelerate their integration in development. However, measures have been instituted to accelerate de facto equality. Special training Programmes have been started by women's organization with support from Government to equip women with skills that can be absorbed in the job market. Special emphasis has been placed on providing women with skills in non-traditional fields such as masonry, carpentary upholstery and as drivers so as to fill vacancies that exist in public or private institutions and companies.

66. Women are prepared for employment in income generating projects through training programmes which have special components and facilities to foster their participation. Learnt skills or undeveloped skills in areas of craft and food processing are also developed with the aim of augmenting the income of women in the home thereby creating a greater element of economic independence. Government Agencies support women's ventures by providing special training facilities and programmes in craft, food processing and agricultural production. marketing facilities and technical assistance is also provided to enhance the viability of the income earning programmes which result from such training.

67. Government's policy is that women should not be dismissed from their jobs nor should they lose benefits because of pregnancies. In addition, through the government Social Security Programmes such as the National Insurance Scheme and Medical Scheme offered by public corporations and private businesses, women benefit from maternity leave with pay.

68. Women who are self-employed also contribute to this Scheme.

69. The National Insurance Scheme came into being by an Act of Parliament cited as the National Insurance and Social Security Act 1969, and became operational in January, 1970.

70. It is clear that much more is needed in terms of supportive services countrywide in the form of day care and recuperation facilities. In 1973, Government established by an Act of Parliament, the Advisory Committee on Women's Affairs (ACWA) as the legal arm of the Council on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana. The members of this

Committee were empowered. to visit places at which women were employed to check on their conditions of work and to report to the Ministry of Labour for action to be taken where such conditions are not of the required standard.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5:

71. Article 5 of the Convention urges that appropriate steps be taken to modify social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women based on notions of the inferiority of either sex.

72. School curricula do not permit sex-stereotyping and with the implementation of a policy of free and co-education from Nursery to University level in 1976, both males and females in all educational institutions are encouraged to view each other as co-worker and partner. Through lectures and symposia they are guided in their associations with the opposite sex and are encouraged to show regard for one another. Lecturers from women's organizations complement the work done in schools. Women and men are encouraged to inculcate in boys and girls desirable attitudes toward parental responsibility.

73. Article 27 of the Constitution entitles every young person the right to ideological, social, cultural and vocational development and to the socialist order of society. Young people are exposed to courses on leadership development and are free to join youth groups that represent diverse political, social, cultural and religious persuasions. These help to prepare them to assume civic and social responsibilities as they grow older.

74. Safeguard and protection for children are incorporated in the Constitution of Guyana in Article 30.

> Children born out of wedlock are entitled to the legal rights and legal status as are enjoyed by children born in wedlock. All forms of discrimination against children on the basis of their being born out of wedlock are illegal.

75. There is still need for an intensification of programmes to ensure the achievement of elimination of prejudices, customs and practices which are based on the inferiority or superiority of either sex. These prejudices are rooted in tradition, religious and social systems and will only be removed by persistent education.

76. In the area of family life, tradition has put the stamp of responsibility for children's upbringing on the mother. Intensified family life education programmes are being conducted throughout the country to educate and encourage present day and future fathers to carry out the responsibility of their roles in the home and the family.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 6:

77. While prostitution in Guyana is not a major problem the view is held that it arises out of an economic need and therefore the Guyana Government must spearhead initiatives to erase the cause and provide preventative measures that would minimise the need.

78. Efforts are being made to prevent women being lured into prostitution through a variety of educational and training opportunities afforded them. In recent years also, there is greater recognition by society of the value of women and the contribution they can make in the context of nation building.

79. The complementarity of the work of Government Agencies and women's organizations has resulted in facilities to help women augment their income through -

1. increased access to education and training in non-traditional skills;

2. increased opportunities for earning income due to the diversification of the economy and the efforts of non-governmental organization in this direction.

3. increased opportunities for employment.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 7:

80. Women's involvement in the political and public life of the country on equal terms with men was reflected in their participation in a massive mobilisation effort organized as part of the nationalistic struggle which culminated in the first general elections held under universal adult suffrage in 1953. At these elections women for the first time in large numbers exercised their right to vote giving greater impact to universal adult suffrage.

81. Since that time women have continued to exercise their right to vote at national elections and referenda. They have equal rights in terms of eligibility for election to all public elected bodies, councils and committees.

82. This eligibility extends to policy making bodies such as:

- the National Parliament
- the Regional Democratic Councils - the regional body which governs each of the ten regions
- the Trades Union Congress
- other religious, social and cultural organizations found at national, regional or district levels statutory government bodies and agencies
- statutory government bodies and agencies.

83. Women's representation affords them the opportunity to be integrally involved in the decision making process by virtue of the offices they hold as Government Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Permanent Secretaries, Senior Officials of the government apparatus at the level of Government Departments and the State Corporations and Municipalities.

STATISTICS IN THIS AREA INDICATE

Permanent Secretaries

1981 - There were two women permanent secretaries in 1981

Magistrates

1981 - Women represented 3 of 23 or 13%
1982 - Women represented 4 of 25 or 16%

Judges

1981 - Women represented 1 of 17 or 5.9%
In 1981, the number of women Ministers in the Government were 3 out of 24 or 12.5% and there were no female Vice Presidents.
In 1981, of 65 members of Parliament 17 or 26.2% were women.
In 1981, of 10 Regional Democratic Councils women represented 19%.
In 1981, of 10 Chairmen of the Regional Democratic Councils none were women.
In 1981, on the National Congress of Local Democratic organs, women represented 20%.
In 1981, of 5 Mayors of Towns of Guyana, women represented 2 or 40%.
In 1981, of 6 Deputy Mayors of Towns, women represented 3 or 50%.

84. Women are represented on all Governmental Boards, Corporations and Councils. In addition, women are represented at the governmental and non-governmental levels on all Sub-Committees of the Economic and Social Council of the State Planning Commission which is the national institution responsible for co-ordination of and monitoring the national and sectoral development programmes.

85. Women participate actively in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with public and political life of the country.

86. Owing to the lack of statistical information on women's participation in public life, the Women's Affairs Bureau has put in place a special programme to have agencies disaggregate information by sex.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 8:

87. Article 8 stipulates that "State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women ..."the opportunity to represent their Government at International level and to participate in the work of International Organizations."

88. As stated in Article 7 there is no hindrance to women's participation at the decision making level of the political and civic life of the nation. However, at the international level, women's involvement at certain functional levels does not equate with that of men. Women's involvement at the levels of Ambassadors and/or Counsuls General is regrettably minimal.

89. Notwithstanding this, it is to the credit of our women folk that they have been able to obtain international recognition. This resulted from participation which earned for Guyana membership on the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Guyana is currently holding the office of Chairmanship of the Committee.

90. Problems that still hinder more effective participation of women in greater number at the decision making levels as far as Articles 7 and 8 attempt to safeguard are: -

- lack of instrumental competence
- need for consciousness-raising in matters of political importance
- hitherto unequal opportunities for education and training
- child rearing roles and responsibilities
- inadequate exposure to international affairs

91. Leading Women's Organizations and the Women's Affairs Bureau recognise the need to expose women more fully to international affairs and to awaken a deeper interest and sense of involvement. These groups are in the process of taking special initiatives to increase women's participation especially at the international level. In addition it is necessary to emphasise the need for female involvement in the awareness of the various aspects of international affairs within the formal school system. This will enhance preparation of women for representative roles at international levels.

92. Government has provided financial and organizational support to enable women be represented at the major World Conferences sponsored by the United Nations to focus on issues relating to women's role in development as well as International and Regional Conferences sponsored by other intergovernmental agencies and non-Governmental agencies.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 9:

93. On issues pertaining to nationality and women's rights to acquire, change or retain same, the Constitution accords equal rights to women in the area of citizenship. This

means therefore that women have the right to decide to retain or change their nationality irrespective of the husband's nationality or his possible status as an alien. A woman shall not be rendered stateless or forced to automatically acquire her husband's nationality through marriage. Article 45 of the Constitution states:

> Any person who, after the commencement of this Constitution, marries a person who is or becomes a citizen of Guyana shall be entitled, upon making application in such manner and taking such oath of allegiance as may be prescribed, to be registered as a citizen of Guyana.

94. With respect to equality of men and women with regard to citizenship in relation to children, the State's position is unequivocally stated in Article 44 of the Constitution, and it upholds the woman's right with respect to determination of citizenship for her children.

Article 44:

> A person born outside of Guyana after the commencement of this Constitution shall become a citizen of Guyana at the date of his birth if at that date his father or mother is a citizen of Guyana otherwise than by virtue of this article.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 10:

95. The Guyana Government is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity that allows each individual to develop his/her potential to the fullest. Government recognises that the role of education is vital to the realisation of every individual having access to the resources of the country.

96. The policy is emphasised in Article 27 of the Constitution of Guyana which states "Every citizen has the right to free education from nursery to university as well as at non-formal places where opportunities are provided for education and training."

97. Government's commitment is reflected in appropriate measures taken to ensure that in education there is no discrimination.

These measures include:

1. Provision of free education at Nursery, Primary, Secondary and University levels - 1976.

2. Co-education in all schools and educational institutions.

3. Study leave with pay for public servants, teachers, staff of Government Agencies and Corporations.

4. Hinterland scholarships to allow indigenous Guyanese in the Hinterland areas the opportunity to obtain secondary and higher education.

5. The provision of educational opportunities at the Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels, including technical and vocational education, teacher training and workers' education.

6. Provision of free basic text and note books at primary and secondary levels.

98. With regard to the issue of curriculum, teaching staff and school facilities, these are available to all students of both sexes in urban and rural areas. Curricula of the formal school system at the Nursery, Primary and Secondary levels reflect the dimensions of:

(i) the cognitive and affective behavioural patterns desirable for children at those three levels;

and ii) the new social values and economic parameters of the socialist framework which reflect the country's goals and aspirations.

99. Curriculum materials in the form of text, supplementary reading and practice materials are produced in a number of subject areas at the Nursery, Primary and Secondary levels for use in all schools in the country. To ensure proper training and orientation for all teachers, workshops and seminars are conducted to facilitate the teaching process and the inculcation of desirable attitudes in students. Adequate school premises, suitable facilities and equipment which facilitate curriculum implementation are provided and maintained for the benefit and use of girls and boys in all communities.

100. Government policy stresses human development and the removal of all forms of discrimination by virtue of sex, race, religion or other factors. Government's concern that stereotyped concepts of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education should be eradicated, found expression in a policy that all educational institutions must be co-educational. This was effected countrywide in 1976, though many of these institutions were already co-educational. Efforts are being made to ensure that text books, supplementary materials, games, particularly at the Nursery level, and other aspects of the school programmes do not promote sex stereotyping.

101. Access to education is ensured for all from 3 years 9 months, and this applies to schools in urban and rural communities. Children spend two years at this level. At the Primary level education is compulsory from 5 years 9 months and usually lasts for a period of six years. The involvement ratio at this level* is 90:50 (m) and 94:40 (f). Secondary level* education is offered in three environments: general secondary schools, secondary departments of primary schools and community high schools. Secondary level* education is not compulsory and the involvement ratio is considerably lower (53:16) (m) (54:29) (f).

102. Enrolment of girls at the General Secondary level is slightly higher than for boys - 56:2% females, 43.79% males.

103. Examinations at all levels of the education system are the same for all students, and students for these are prepared without preference for either sex. Teachers in schools at all three levels use different types of diagnostic, formative and summative evaluation measures.

104. Promotion to higher grades is based on academic performance on a prescribed internal examination peculiar to each grade, level and school. To move from first level (Primary) to second level (Secondary) education all children 10 - 12 years write a national standard test set by the Test Development Unit of the Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture. The results of this permit these students to be placed in either General Secondary or Community High School programmes which are offered at Secondary Level.

105. General Secondary Schools prepare students for the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Examination at the General and Basic Proficiency levels and for the London University General Certificate of Education at Ordinary and Advanced levels. These programmes are of 5 and 7 years' duration, and a wide range of Arts and Science subjects as well as Technical and Vocational subjects are offered. Both these certificates provide entry to University, Higher Technical/Vocational Institutions, Teacher Training

---

* Source of Information - A Digest of Educational Statistics (1981/1982)

Institutions or jobs in public and private enter prises.

106. Those students who follow the Community High School programme, which is more practically oriented, enter for local proficiency examinations set by the Test Development Unit. These examinations provide certification for the job market and depending on their level of performance, some students become eligible for a transfer to the General Secondary Programme.

107. At the level of Higher Education, opportunities are provided for men and women who have the basic entry requirements to pursue degree, diploma and certificate courses of their choice in any of the faculties of the University of Guyana. This allows more people to take advantage of University education without the constraints of economic factors, since education is also free at this level. Male and female employees of the State who are attending University on a fulltime basis are released on full salary.

108. At the University level*, in general, male enrolment out-numbers female enrolment by a ratio of approximately 2:1. In the Faculty of Arts, in 1980/1981 women out-number men (60% (f) and 40% (m)), while in the Faculty of Education surprisingly, female enrolment is 45.45% and male 54.55%.

109. It is encouraging that in the field of Medical Technology female enrolment is 50%, Accountancy 26%, Natural Science 36.5% and Social Science 33.33% demonstrating women's increased involvement in University studies from 1975, when government implemented the progressive scheme of granting leave with pay to civil servants for a period of five years, enabling them to complete a degree programme.

110. Through the establishment of liaison personnel between Women's Organizations, other Agencies and the Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture, a monitoring mechanism now exists to detect and correct any stereotypical behaviour that might surface.

111. Higher level training schemes for both internal and external training are conducted by the Public Service Ministry. These schemes ensure training in areas where both men and women have the same opportunities to benefit from scholarships, grants and all forms of technical assistance.

112. There is an increase in the number of women who now seek training in non-traditional fields such as Helicopter Pilot Training, Veterinary Medicine, Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Forestry, Textile Management, Computer Science and Accountancy.

113. In the Technical and Vocational fields, there is equal opportunity for both sexes to benefit from this kind of educational opportunity. However, more males than females made use of this opportunity. Technical and vocational education is offered in the Community High School programme and at a higher level at the two Technical Institutes, one Industrial Training Centre, two Training Centres of large Industries - The Bauxite Industry and the Sugar Industry - and at the University of Guyana.

114. The trend in relation to choice of course indicates that female enrolment continues to dominate in, areas like Secretarial Science and Typist/Clerk courses. However, progressively more females are entering the engineering and construction fields. Female trainees are registering for courses such as concrete practice, plumbing, motor vehicle maintenance, welding and accounting .

115. While there are several Home Economics Schools which are integrated into the Secondary School system at all levels, there are two national schools of Home Economics

---

* Source of Information - Annual Report of Registry, University of Guyana (1981/1982)

and two Institutions for training in Agriculture.

116. Home Economics Courses no longer prepare females for the traditionally accepted domestic role. Instead the emphasis in the programme is on knowledge and skills which lead directly into professional training as a design for living and as preparation for the world of work. These traditional areas are still basically dominated by females though a few males are now displaying an interest in pursuing these courses.

117. Teacher Training is provided for the Nursery, Primary and Secondary levels at four teacher training institutions. The field of education has always attracted women and a look at staffing in the education system shows that there are more women than men who opt to become teachers.

118. Nevertheless, the top administrative Positions in schools (Headteacher level) particularly at Secondary level show an overwhelming disparity in placement in favour of men. Fortunately, in terms of professional administration at the Central Ministry this imbalance is less evident for at this level, female participation is 48%. At the Technical Institutions in earlier times female members of staff taught mainly Secretarial Science Courses, but they are now teaching such courses as plumbing, concreting and bricklaying. Staff composition at the University level in 1981/1982 indicates female lecturers in all Faculties. Overall staffing shows a breakdown of 79.06% (m), 20.94% (f) while there is little disparity between male/female staff composition in the Faculty of Education (51.82% male, 48.28% female).

119. Non-formal education is provided by both Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations. The programmes undertaken by those Agencies span the gamut of academic, technical, creative craft, leadership, management and nutritional courses. These provide the means whereby women who have had incomplete schooling or are interested in further self-development can continue to improve themselves.

120. For various reasons wastage in the school system occurs more at the Secondary level than at the primary level. Traditionally girls dropped out of the school system after primary level to prepare for the accepted roles as wives and mothers. Happily this practice is no longer the norm and there are positive efforts to have women integrated into national development. Recent figures show a trend towards a smaller percentage of girls dropping out of the system before completing second level education. It has also been noted that a greater number of women than men participate in Adult Education Programmes.

121. The programmes offered by the Adult Education Association, the Department of Extra-Mural Studies along with voluntary organizations give these drop-outs a second chance.

122. One such programme - the Early School Leavers Programme conducted by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) - is a two-year course of basic academic work and training in vocational skills geared to income generation. It is conducted for girls between the ages of 15 and 19 years.

123. Physical Education and Sports form part of the curriculum and/or co-curricular activities of schools at the Nursery, Primary and Secondary levels. Mass games, an aspect of Physical Education, was introduced to male and female students at the Primary and Secondary levels in 1979. It aims at developing discipline and co-operation (consistent with Guyanese principles of co-operativism,) developing awareness, and alertness of mind while celebrating development projects and events of national importance through a co-operative display of dance, calisthenics, music and art.

124. There is a shortage of trained Physical Education teachers, and consequently greater emphasis is placed on sports than on Physical Education. In Institutions, where schools have both the needed personnel and facilities, boys and girls are given the opportunity to

participate in various fields of sports through competitions promoted at the school, district, regional and national levels.

125. Specific educational information to help ensure the health and wellbeing of families is available to women through the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, the Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association (GRPA), Guidance programmes in schools, Women's Organizations, the Press and Radio. The Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association is mainly engaged in training and sensitising women and men to the benefits of family planning and a responsible approach to parenthood through programmes of Family Planning and Guidance. These programmes reach out to distant communities as well as to Schools, Public Corporations, Health Institutions, Health Visitors, Nurses, Midwives, etc.

126. Religious and Social Organizations which provide spiritual, social and economic upliftment for women, also expose them to leadership training and sensitise them to their civic responsibilities.

127. Positive efforts at eliminating discrimination in education are ably supported by school libraries, out-of-school activities and educational broadcast programmes. These all help to promote awareness of the desirability and necessity of boys and girls working together for national development. Nonetheless old habits die hard and some male positions on the inferiority of women still surface in the midst of these positive directions.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 11:

128. Enshrined in the Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana is the right to work, and the principles of equality of opportunity for all.

Article 22 (1) of the Constitution states that -

> Every citizen has the right to work and its free selection in accordance with social requirements and personal qualifications. He has the right to be rewarded according to the nature, quality and quantity of his work. Women and men have the right to equal pay for equal work.

As was stated before, Article 29 (1) of the Constitution stipulates that -

> Women and men have equal rights and the same legal status in all spheres of political, economic, and social life. All forms of discrimination against women on the basis of their sex are illegal.

129. The strategy for improved and increased employment opportunities for women is linked to training and education where every citizen has the right to free education from nursery to university level. Thus through formal and non-formal educational programmes more women have been able to find jobs.

130. Training agencies of Public Corporations have among their intake young women whose selection into their apprenticeship programme is based on the same criteria applicable to young men. However, in the technical field, women's representation is still not adequate in comparison with male intake.

131. According to official records, women's representation in the labour force over the last ten years shows a slight percentage increase of 3.1% from 1977 (26.9%) to (30.0%) in 1980.

132. These records however do not take into account the number of women entrepreneurs who have over the years become self-employed or women who are engaged in cottage industry-type economic activities in their immediate environment, such as agriculture, poultry rearing, craft production, canteen and catering or business activities.

133. At the level of some major nationally owned industrial undertakings, female employment in some sectors has improved, even though there is much more to be done.

134. Statistics which are available for major industries will indicate the positive trend, though it is very small in the industrial sector. This is an area of concern as it is the area of industrial development which commands a higher remuneration. In this regard, the economic empowerment of women is of concern as this has a relationship to their social status.

135. One major industry has been selected, as an example, the Guyana Mining Enterprise, which was nationalised in 1971.

GUYANA MINING ENTERPRISE:

136. Women's participation in the labour force has not been increasing significantly in the technical field:-

137. In the technical field, at the senior management level in 1976, of a total of 218 persons, women represented 34 or 15.6%.

138. In 1978 of a total of 227 staff members, women represented 34 or 15%.

139. However, in the Administrative field at the senior management level, women's participation between 1976 and 1982 was as follows:

In 1976 of 34 staff members, women represented 14 or 41%
In 1978 of 29 staff members, women represented 10 or 34.5%
In 1982 of 42 staff members, women represented 20 or 47.6%

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT:

Technical

In 1976 of a total of 555 staff members, women represented 30 or 5.4%
In 1978 of a total of 645, women represented 45 or 7%.
In 1982 of a total of 593, women represented 42 or 7%
Women's participation has been increasing, but at a slow rate.

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR:

140. In the industrial sector, there was marked progress from 1977 to 1982, which was encouraging, bearing in mind women's low skill level in this field.

In 1977 of a total of 5,035 employees, 117 were women or 2.3%.
In 1978 of a total of 4,706 employees, 181 were women or 3.8%, an increase of 1.5% over a two-year period.
In 1982 of a total of 4,904 employees, 300 or 6.1% were women, an increase of 3.8% over a five-year period.

141. Overall from 1977-1982, women's participation and employment levels in the industry increased from 9.3% in 1977 to 15.1 in 1982.

142. There is a need to have a more systematic monitoring mechanism of women's progress in non-traditional fields, and to create a link with the educational system, at the formal and non-formal levels, in a more structured fashion, to ensure that women acquire technical and vocational skills.

143. Governmental and non-governmental agencies providing non-formal education, play a pivotal role in supporting the formal education system by designing and fashioning linkages between education and work. This becomes even more necessary now with the country's main thrust in agriculture, particularly where emphasis is centred on production of non-traditional agricultural commodities for local consumption and for export.

144. One implication of this policy is the deployment of human resources from the non-productive sectors into those areas that emphasise agro-based industries. As a result short term training and re-training in relevant skills to meet the new needs fall within the ambit of governmental and non-governmental agencies providing non-formal education.

145. Evidence of this type of training is seen in the style of operation of the Adult Education Association and the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the University of Guyana. They can best be described as 'broker' institutions . For example, in response to requests from communities where fishing is an important industry, the Adult Education Association conducts classes in fish preservation, packaging and preparation.

146. Women's organizations through their own initiatives have organized training programmes in areas such as textile designing and tie-dyeing, weaving, development. of handicraft, craft skills using indigenous materials, garment manufacturing, food processing, catering and upholstery. In addition, training programmes have been organized in non-traditional areas such as brick-laying, carpentry, tableware manufacturing, mat making from indigenous materials, bandage making and production of recycled paper .

147. These skills-training programmes have enabled women to transform the potential of traditional skills into income earning possibilities. This has led to the development of supportive training programmes in costing, budgeting and project preparation, implementation and project management training courses.

148. Among the organizations which have organized skills-training programmes to provide women with income earning options are the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement, the Conference on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana, the Guyana Federation of Women's Institutes and the Young Women's Christian Association.

149. Among some of the projects established by the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement are Garment Manufacturing Centres, Textile Designing. and tie-dye production centres, mat-making and bandage making production units and a paper recycling plant project The largest project which has been planned by a women's organization is a seven million dollar table ware factory, spearheaded by the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement.

150. The Conference on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana has established a Garment Factory and a Canteen and Catering Project. This organization also has responsibility for the training of female recruits for the National Guard Service.

151. Technical support and funding have been secured for some of these projects from agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF and the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

152. With regard to Social Security, the National Insurance Act Chapter 36:01 provides for social security for all workers. Under this Scheme the following are benefits provided

(i) Old age - periodical to payments to an insured person who has reached sixty-five years;

(ii) Invalidity benefit payments to an insured person rendered permanently

incapable of work otherwise than as 2 result of employment injury;

(iii) Survivor's benefit - periodical payments in respect of an insured person who dies and who immediately before death was receiving old age benefit or invalidity benefit or in respect of an insured person who dies otherwise than as a result of employment injury;

(iv) Sickness benefit is periodical payments to an insured person rendered temporarily incapable of work otherwise than as a result of employment injury;

(v) Maternity leave - women are eligible for 13 weeks' maternity leave, six weeks of which could be taken before confinement;

(vi) Funeral benefit payment on death of an insured person or of a person in such relationship to an insured person as may be prescribed.

153. The Holiday with Pay Act Chapter 99:02 provides for the grant of leave on an annual basis. In addition, separate service agreements provide for extended leave with pay and leave passage assistance relative to specific years of service.

154. The Factories Act Chapter 95:02 legislates on a number of areas as regards health and safety - Recent recommendations for minor amendments and additions include:

(i) protection of children undergoing work-study in factories;
(ii) the prescription of maximum weight to be carried by women;
(iii) the use of dangerous substances in factories, the use of wave-enery, the use of protective wear, conditions to be observed in driving operations;
(iv) prescribing arrangements for ensuring the safety and absence of risk of health in connection with the use, storage, handling and transport of articles and substances;
(v) institutionalisation of safety councils at the work place.

155. There is no discrimination against women because of their marital status. Women are dismissed because of marriage or maternity. Women enjoy maternity leave with pay since they benefit from the National Insurance Scheme. They become eligible for maternity benefits after making given number of contributions. Once they fulfil these requirements women become entitled to thirteen weeks of leave for purposes of maternity and confinement. Women do not lose service for maternity reasons. Paid leave is granted by a Company, Ministry or Agency. The worker then receives from the National Insurance Scheme the difference between the worker's normal salary and the amount covered by the Company, Ministry or Agency.

156. Collective Labour Agreements as well as the Maternity Regulations under the.National Insurance Act offer an added protection for pregnant women. During pregnancy women doing jobs which may impose severe strain on their health, such as certain farm jobs, and others in the mechanical departments are given lighter duties consistent with their physical condition. Based on recommendations from medical practitioners, it has been the norm for employing agencies to place prenant women in areas that do not over-tax their health.

157. With the increasing number of working mothers, Government has attempted to provide supportive social services for the care of young children. It is, however, accepted by both governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations that there is need for more supportive social services.

158. As a consequence, the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the University of Guyana is now conducting a survey of all day care centres in order to ascertain needs and priorities. This assessment of needs is a pre-requisite for improving and increasing

supportive social services.

159. Conscious of the need to monitor and evaluate even the changes that are made in the interest of women and of the need to continue to examine the laws and social conditions as they affect women, the Women's Affairs Bureau has seen fit to establish a Legal Affairs Committee which advises the Bureau .

160. As identified in Articles 2 and 3, the laws which restrict employment of women in some areas will be changed (during the course of this year). Those laws have been identified (and appended) and Dratt Legislation has been prepared. Cognisance is taken of the need for periodic reviews to be made of protective legislation related to matters covered in this Article. This will ensure that appropriate changes can be made in response to technological scientific acdvances.

161. It seems, however, that although there is no sex discrimination in education or in job opportunities most of our young women appear to lack what is defined as instrumental competence, that attribute which is characterised as socially responsible, achievement-oriented, independence and purposiveness. Consequently, even though there has been an increase in the number women employed, they tend to be assigned to lower and middle-level tasks, and only a small percentage acquire upper level responsibilities and status. It is obvious therefore, that merely providing women with skills is not enough, mobilising, the productive potential of our women must become the concern of all Agencies. The cultural, social and political environment must also be conducive to facilitate the development of a high level of instrumental competence among our women folk.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 12:

162. There is no discrimination against women in Guyana in respect to health care. The constitution of Guyana (Article 24) stipulates the right of every citizen to free medical attention. Government since Independence through a network of health administration agencies has improved physical and socio-economic accessibility to health care not only by introducing a variety of quantitative and qualitative measures but by stepping up public education so that more people could become aware of available health facilities.

Measures introduced include:

- The construction of a number of health facilities - hospitals, health stations and health posts within all ten (10) Regions of the country. Health Centres in particular, along with maternity clinics attached to the various hospitals are largely concerned with the provision of adequate services and advice to pregnant mothers at all stages during and after pregnancy. Such service and advice on care, nutritional requirements and family planning are supplied free by Government.

- The implementation of health, manpower development and training programmes. Programmes have been undertaken to train Community Health Workers to provide primary health care services. A similar type of programme has been carried out by the Responsible Parenthood Association in conjunction with the Ministry of Health in one of the rural areas.

- The compilation of a School Health Book. Because of the recognition of the need for education in all aspects of health, this book has been designed to assist school teachers in helping the child maintain a high standard of health.

- Compulsory immunisation through the Maternal and Child Care Unit. Immunization of mothers during pregnancy has been an ongoing activity. The Unit from its inception, has been providing free cost of care, advice and counselling for rural areas throughout Guyana. It gives valuable support to the

general policies governing the care of women during pregnancy. The immunization of all children prior to entry into nursery schools is a recent stipulation by Government which highlights the importance placed on this aspect of health.

- Efforts to eradicate malnutrition - Clinics have been made available in an effort to control malnutrition among children especially during the first five years of life. The National Food and Nutrition Council which is engaged in nutrition education programmes has been carrying out many surveys to determine the nutritional status of the people of Guyana. One of the outcomes of these surveys is the publication of a booklet giving the requirements for a balanced diet. This booklet is used as a teaching aid at educational institutions and as a source of information by groups and organizations.

163. In addition to these measures, special initiatives have been taken to reduce the possibility of certain imbalances which militate against women and their health. For example, although the laws relating to health protection generally offer adequate protection for women and men equally, a few have been identified (Mining Act: Chapter 65:02, Section 26) for amendment.

164. Another example is the Occupational Health and Safety Unit which has been paying special attention to those factories where women represent the majority of the work force. Its purpose is to identify potential and existing problems in work places and recommend feasible solutions for the reduction of such problems.

Some of the strategies for achieving the above are:

- promoting personal and environmental protection against noise, cotton dust, acid and other chemicals used in industry;
- advocating the benefits of wearing respirators, earplugs, gloves aprons and other protective devices;
- advising management of the appropriate industrial seating accommodation which improves workers' comfort and performance;
- seeking simple ways of reducing boredom resulting from the repetitive nature of their jobs;
- emphasizing the importance of personal hygiene practices.

165. The provisions of health education and health care are not restricted to the Ministry of Health. A number of other agencies - non-governmental, also play a pivotal role in improving health facilities and helping women to become aware of those available.

166. The Women's Affairs Bureau monitors and co-ordinates the work of women's organizations engaged in supportive health programmes. Linkages, therefore, exist among governmental and non-governmental organizations. They engage in programmes that reinforce nutritional education through practical demonstrations on the use of local foods, methods of cooking and food preparation. These organizations also act as pressure groups to ensure that laws and regulations designed for the protection of women are effective and that measures beneficial to women are enforced where necessary .

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 13:

167. The Dependants' Pension Scheme became operational in the Public Service from August 1978. Under the scheme women, as contributors, are entitled to the same family benefits as men.

168. All other Government Agencies have contributory Pension Schemes which not only require women to make the same contributions as men, but also to benefit equally.

For example, in some public corporations the married female who is entitled to vacation and incidental travel allowances and whose spouse is not employed by the corporation, gets allowances for both herself and spouse.

169. Family benefits to women and expectant mothers are guaranteed under Article 29 (2) of the Constitution.

170. Women have the right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of credit, for agricultural and industrial purposes and for housing. They are granted these facilities based on the same criteria used for men viz. security in the form of an Insurance Policy, fixed deposit, transport (in the case of mortgages) and ability to repay.

171. However, it must be noted that because of their relatively lower economic status, access by women to the requisite securities tends to be more difficult. Because of this, some efforts have been made to facilitate women in this regard, for example, in determining women's eligibility for loans, flexibility is exercised by considering as worth self-employment ventures such as craft production, cultivation of kitchen gardens and cottage industries.

172. Women are eligible for loans at all banks where loans are granted for mortgages and other purposes. Efforts are being made to obtain statistics from relevant agencies to assess the implementation of non-discriminatory practices.

173. In the area of sports, facilities for most games are available, but the bias nationally has always been towards all-male sports such as cricket, football, boxing, basketball, cycling. The few sports in which only women participate like netball, ladies basketball, ladies hockey do not attract an appreciable number of participants or spectators.

174. This may have emanated from the fact that prior to 1976 secondary schools which were co-educational placed more emphasis on providing sports facilities for males. In the few girls' secondary schools their impact on sports was only minimal. With the advent of universal co-education, progress has been made in providing sports for females in previously male schools and promoting women's sports in general. However, there is need for improved promotional structures and facilities for women's involvement in sports.

175. As a result, young women who have graduated from the school system tend not to maintain an interest in sports as participants.

176. In order to promote sport generally some employees provide facilities for engaging in recreational activities during working hours. These provisions must be extended considerably if they are to be effective. Some individual employers and trade groupings promote involvement of women in sports through organizations of competitions and granting of leave with pay for their participation at national, regional and international sporting events. These need to be encouraged on a wider scale.

177. The performing arts have been an avenue for high involvement of women. In 1980 of the eighty (8O) members of the thirty-two year-old Guyana Music Teachers Association only seven (7) were male, while six (6) of the nine (9) instructors at the National School of Dance were females.

178. Women's ability to exercise these rights and become involved in these activities is, in some cases, hindered by cultural patterns which allow men to dictate to women the nature of the activities which they could pursue.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 14:

179. In 1981, the Government of Guyana put in place the Regional System, a system

of local democracy who is designed to accommodate greater participation in decision-making by all Guyanese as well as to facilitate the development process more equitably throughout the country. This is detailed in Article 71 of the Constitution.

180. Each Regional Democratic Council, the main administrative organ, has Sub-Committees in areas such as Health and Education. Through representation on the Council as well as the Sub-Committees, women have the opportunity to make inputs in development plans and participate in decision-making particularly in areas which affect their welfare.

181. The Women's Affairs Bureau, established in January 1981, and acting as the lead agency in the formulation of national plans and policies relating to the Status of Women, has been engaged in the establishment of Committees for Women's Affairs in the Regions. These Committees are concerned with the involvement of women in continuing education, training, dissemination of information and general improvement of the lot of women.

182. They also serve as a feedback mechanism for the Bureau as well as the Regional Democratic Councils. The Bureau needs to ensure that in the near future Committees are established in all Regions with appropriate communication systems being effected so that the objectives can be achieved. Voluntary Women's Organizations such as Women's Institutes, Church Groups and the Women's Arms of Political Parties have over the years played a crucial part in the development of skills and changing attitudes of rural women. However, their impact has been limited by a variety of factors including the narrow target group for their activities, declining membership in some instances and cultural differences in others.

183. It is still possible though for development at the regional and national levels to be positively influenced, if policy makers at these levels seek to involve these organizations more at the time of planning. Their knowledge and experience could only enhance the development process. This would be realized only when women's contributions, particularly through women's organizations, assume greater credence and attitudes towards their roles and capabilities deviate from the traditional.

184. Self-help and Co-operativism are a way of life in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, through mobilization of Guyanese - mostly women, the Government saved 12 million dollars (G$12M) in foreign exchange. Self-help activities in the housing sector were fostered by a policy which allowed workers to receive full pay while on work release for construction purposes. At the community level, Voluntary Women's Organizations have been actively engaged in self-help activities particularly in the area of environmental health and sanitation.

185. Rural women were accorded the right to form co-operatives in 1946 and the right to full membership in agricultural co-operatives in 1948. They have since been involved in consumers, canteen and catering co-operatives as well as credit unions. Through increased use of non-formal educational strategies, the participation of rural women in co-operatives could be increased. This would also provide more opportunity for employment and self-employment.

186. There is no legal barrier to participation of women in community activities. Guyana has on record some forty (40) women's organizations of national character - political, social, economic, cultural and/or religious in focus. The majority of citizens providing community services are women.

187. Already in place in each Region are health facilities, educational services, agricultural support systems and social security facilities.

188. The Regional Democratic Councils, which have been institutionalized in all ten

Administrative Regions of Guyana are responsible for formulation of development plans and for administering their own budget. One of their tasks will be to inform all residents of and sensitise them to the available opportunities and services. The Councils are supported by the Women's Affairs Bureau, Voluntary Women's Organizations and Government Agencies which operate in the Region.

189. There is need for more facilities for education and training activities in some Regions. However, the relevant areas of emphasis, population size and distribution as well as economic factors will have to be considered bearing in mind the productive focus of each Region.

190. Women have a legal right to agricultural credit. Due to the Government's emphasis on agriculture, citizens in all regions of the country have access to credit facilities through membership in credit unions and/or from the Regional Branches of the Guyana Co-operative agricultural and Industrial Development Bank (GAIBANK).

191. In the areas of Appropriate Technology, women in Guyana have been pioneers not only at the national level, but also at the international level. Guyana, through the women's arm of the ruling political party was engaged in co-operative programme in Appropriate Technology with UNICEF since 1979.

192. The programme is designed to ensure that women develop skills and expertise in the construction as well as the utilisation of Appropriate Technology devices not only for use in the home but as an income-generating activity, thus providing a means of improving the living conditions of these women and their families. The programme encompasses experimentation with and production of cooking devices such as clay firesides, clay coal-pots, solar dryers and home improvement devices such as wooden trays, clothes hangers and dust pans.

193. There is no barrier to women's acquisition of land once they have the willingness.to be involved in agricultural production as Article 18 of the Constitution makes provision for "land to the Tiller". In every Region land selection committees receive and process applications then make allocations without any bias.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 15:

194. As pointed out before, Article 29 of the Constitution provides for equality between the sexes and both men and women can seek redress in the courts whenever their rights are infringed.

195. By the Married Persons (Property) Act, Chapter 45:04, separate property rights were conferred on married women.

196. Under section 7 of the Matrimonial Causes Act, Chapter 45:02, any property which is acquired by or devolves upon a married woman during the period of separation under a judicial decree of separation is not affected by any restraint upon anticipation attached to the enjoyment of property by her.

197. Section 2 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act has abolished all restrictions upon anticipation or alienation attaching to the property of a married women contained in any instrument executed after 1st January, 1953, as long as they could not have been similarly attached to the enjoyment of the property of a man.

198. A married women is in the same position as a man regarding her enjoyment and disposition of property.

199. Under the common law, applicable to Guyana the domicile of a husband is communicated to his wife immediately upon the solemnization of the marriage and is

retained by her for the duration of the marriage so that she cannot during the marriage acquire a separate domicile of her own. Under Section 7 (1) of the Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana Act 1980 the courts will construe the law with a modification to allow married women to acquire domicile in the same way as men from the date of the commencement of the Constitution.

200. Article 148 (1) of the Constitution which provides for the protection of freedom of movement states:

> No person shall be deprived of his freedom of movement, that is to say, the right to move freely throughout Guyana, the right to reside in any part of Guyana, the right to enter Guyana, the right to leave Guyana and immunity from expulsion from Guyana.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 16:

201. A man and a woman enjoy the right to enter into marriage by mutual consent providing they are both 18 years or over.

202. Under Section 55 (c) (i) of the Marriage Act, Chapter 45:01, the consent of the parties to accept the other as wife or husband must be clearly expressed.

203. Minors who are not widows or widowers cannot marry unless they receive the consent of a parent, although provision is made for dispensing with the need for consent where such consent cannot be obtained owing to the absence, in-accessibility or disability of the person whose consent is required, and for the substitution of the consent of the High Court for the consent of that person where consent is refused or unreasonably withheld - see sections 31 and 33 of the Marriage Act (Appendix III).

204. Through consenting parties may enter into a marriage contract, custom and practice still permit arranged marriages in some sections of the Guyanese society. This does not necessarily imply that the couple is displeased with their respective partners though sometimes reluctance to comply could create tension within the family structure. A more enlightened approach by succeeding generations is helping to minimize the practice. Nonetheless family life education must be intensified in this direction.

205. Under section 29 of the Marriage Act, the prohibition of marriage between persons who stand in a relationship to each other arising from consanguinity or from affinity applies to men and women.

206. In all domestic matters of common concern, including the location of the home, the wife has a right to be heard.

207. On the issue of divorce, a petition may be presented to the Court either by the husband or wife on the grounds of malicious desertion, adultery, cruelty, insanity and in the case of a wife petitioner a conviction by the husband of rape, sodomy or bestiality.

208. The State endorses the importance of children in the framework of the family and under Article 28 of the Constitution every young person has the right to ideological, social, cultural and vocational development. Sections 2 and 3 of the Maintenance Act, Chapter 45:03, provide for men and women to maintain their children. As was stated before the Maintenance Act has been amended to extend its operation also to children born out of wedlock.

209. Access to family life education is made possible, and through the programme offered men and women are shown the necessity for responsible decisions re the number and spacing of their children. There are no legislative measures that prohibit any person male or female from exercising these rights, but religious practices and the norms of some

segments of society often weave their own nebulous influence on decisions on family planning that are contrary to current conceptions of responsible parenthood.

210. The Infancy Act, Chapter 46:01, was amended to provide for equal rights of guardianship and custody to both the father and the mother of an infant whether born in wedlock or out.

211. The Adoption Act, Chapter 46:04, allows for the establishment of an Adoption Board to make arrangements for the adoption of children. An adoption order may be made authorising the adoption of a child by the mother or father of the child, either alone or jointly with her or his spouse. Restrictions on adoption are not based on the criterion of sex except in the case of female child when the sole applicant is a male, unless the court is satisfied that there are special circumstances which justify the making of an adoption order. Single unmarried women can adopt a child without restrictions.

212. As mentioned before under the 1980 Constitution women have equal access with men to academic, vocational and professional training and equal opportunities in employment, remuneration and promotion.

213. In Guyana, on marriage by custom a woman adopts her husband's surname but there is no legal rule compelling her to do so. Children of a marriage also by custom adopt the surname of their father. A child born out of wedlock adopts the surname of its mother, but it can adopt the surname of its father if he consents for his name to be placed on the birth certificate.

214. With respect to rights governing ownership, acquisition management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of movable and immovable property the position is as stated under implementation of Article 15.

215. Under sections 60 and 62 of the Marriage Act registration of marriage is compulsory.

216. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against women was ratified by Guyana on July 17, 1980 and entered into force September 3, 1981 in accordance with Article 27 of the Resolution.

217. This initial report on the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures adopted by Guyana to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and on the progress made in this respect is submitted in keeping with Article 18 of the Resolution.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF ACTS RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT BY THE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED TO RECOMMEND AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW OF GUYANA TO GIVE EFFECT TO ARTICLES 29 AND 30 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

1. Summary Jurisdiction (Magistrates) Act, Chap. 3:05
2. Defamation Act, Chap. 6:03
3. Criminal Law (Procedure) Act, Chap 10:01
4. Insolvency Act, Chap. 12:21
5. Defence Act, Chap. 15:01
6. Pensions Act, Chap. 27:02
7. Pensions (President, Parliamentary and Special Offices) Act, Chap. 27:03
8. Public Officers Widows Act, Chap. 27:07
9. Public Officers (Insurance) Act, Chap. 27:10
10. The Municipal and District Councils Act, Chap. 28:01
11. National Insurance end Social Security Act, Chap. 36:01
12. The New Building Society Act, Chap. 36:21
13. Civil Aviation (Births, Deaths and Missing Persons) Act, Chap. 44:02
14. Marriage Act, Chap. 45:01
15. Matrimonial Causes Act, Chap. 45:02
16. Maintenance Act, Chap. 45:03
17. Married Persons (Property) Act, Chap. 45:04
18. Infancy Act, Chap. 46:01
19. Intoxicating Liquor Licensing Act, Chap. 82:21
20. Exchange Control Act, Chap. 86:01
21. Factories Act, Chap. 95:02
22. Indian Labour Act, Chap. 98:02
23. Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act, Chap. 99:01

APPENDIX II

SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT BY THE COMMITTEE

1. Maintenance Regulations
2. Summary Jurisdiction (Civil Procedure) Rules Chap. 3:05
3. Guyana Citizenship Regulations Chap. 14: 01
4. Education Code Regulations - Chap. 39:01
5. National Library (Management and Control) Regulations
6. National Library (Superannuation) Regulations Chap. 40:01
7. Registration of Births and Deaths Regulations - Chap. 44:01
8. Rules of Court (Matrimonial Causes) - Chap. 45:02
9. Mining Regulations - Chap. 65:01
10. Factories (Health and Welfare) Regulations - Chap. 95:02
11. Minimum Wages (Laundry Employees) Order)
12. Minimum Wages (Employees in Groceries) Order)
13. Minimum Wages (Employees in Hardware Stores) Order) Chap. 98:01
14. Minimum Wages (Employees in Drug Stores) Order)
15. Minimum Wages (Employees in Dry Goods Stores) Order)

UNITED
NATIONS

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.
GENERAL

CEDAW/C/5/Add.64
7 May 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women (CEDAW)

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports of States parties

BARBADOS

V.90-87050

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

PART I		Page	Paragraph
1.1.	General Framework	4	1 - 8
1.2.	Political Framework	4	9 - 13
1.3.	Social Framework	5	14 - 19
1.4.	Brief Financial Picture	6	20 - 21
1.5.	Legal Framework	7	22 - 25

PART II

Introduction		8	26 - 27
ARTICLE 1	The Constitution and Laws of Barbados as they relate to discrimination	8	28 - 30
ARTICLE 2 - 3	Policy and Legal measures to ensure the elimination of discrimination	9	31 - 33
ARTICLE 4	Affirmative action to accelerate equality between men and women	9	34 - 37
ARTICLE 5	Sex roles and stereotypes	10	38 - 45
ARTICLE 6	Prostitution	11	46 - 48
ARTICLE 7	Political and public life	12	49 - 54
ARTICLE 8	International Representation and participation	13	55 - 56
ARTICLE 9	Nationality and citizenship	14	57 - 62
ARTICLE 10	Education	14	63 - 74
ARTICLE 11	Employment	16	75 - 89
ARTICLE 12	Health	18	90 - 98
ARTICLE 13	Social and Economic Benefits	20	99 - 103
ARTICLE 14	Rural Concept	21	104 - 106
ARTICLE 15	Equality before the law	21	107 - 109
ARTICLE 16	Marriage and family law	21	110 - 117
Conclusion		22	118 - 120

APPENDIX	I	- List of Statistical Tables
APPENDIX	II	- List of Supplementary Documents Accompanying this Report.
APPENDIX	III	- Bibliographical Details of Members of the National Commission on the Status of Women.
APPENDIX	IV	- Population (By Age Group).
APPENDIX	V	- Public Service Staff List - revised to 31st December, 1981.

FOREWORD

1. The General Assembly of the United Nations by its resolution 34/180 of 18th December, 1979, adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Under Article 18 of this Convention, each State Party is required to submit a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which it has adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Convention.

2. The Government of Barbados hereby submits its report for the period dating 1982 - 1987.

3. This report was prepared in two parts as directed by the "General Guidelines Regarding the Form and Content of Reports Received from State Parties under Article 18 of the Convention".

4. Part I provides a brief description of the general framework within which the elimination of discrimination is approached.
Part II examines Articles 1 - 16 of the Convention and provides specific information pertaining to each Article.

5. The Government of Barbados is strongly committed and is working towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

PART I

BARBADOS, WEST INDIES

1.1. General Framework

1. Barbados is the most easterly in the Caribbean island chain. It is located in the Atlantic Ocean 59° 37' and 130° 04' north of the Equator. It lies approximately 463 kilometres north-east of the South American mainland and its nearest neighbour St. Vincent is 160.9 kilometres to the west.

2. Barbados is 34 kilometres or 21 miles long and 23 kilometres or 14 miles wide and is divided into 11 parishes. It is of coral formation covering an area of approximately 430 square kilometres. It is generally flat, rising in the centre to the highest point Mount Hillaby at 336 metres above sea level[1].

3. Discovered in the 16th Century by the Portuguese, Barbados was first inhabited by non-militant Arawak Indians until 1627 when the first settlement was erected by the English. Until 1966 when it achieved, political independence, Barbados was a British colony.

4. The climate is mainly hot and sunny all year round despite the fact that Barbados is situated in the hurricane belt; it therefore experiences a hurricane season between June and November every year.

5. Barbados' main crop is sugar cane, however the tourism sector is a primary contributor to foreign exchange, contributing some 10.8% (1987,) to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Tourism, sugar and light manufacturing are the main industries in Barbados with fishing agro-industry and handicraft playing secondary roles.

6. At the end of 1987 Barbados' resident population was just over 253,800 persons, 90% of whom were of African descent and the other 10% were Caucasian or mixed. Of the total population, females represented the higher percentage of 52.2 with males representing the remaining 47.8%.

7. The official language is English and education is compulsory from ages 5 - 16[2] Educational facilities are evenly distributed among the 11 parishes for children as well as adults and are available not only at state level but privately as well.

8. A highly religious community, 70% of Barbados' population is Anglican and the other 30% is associated with Catholic, Methodist, Moravian[3] and other, mainly fundamentalist, denominations.

1.2 Political Framework

9. Barbados is a democratic, independent nation functioning through a Governor-General appointed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and a Prime Minister who is leader of the political party holding the majority of seats in the House of Assembly. The Governor-General is therefore the Head of State who exercises his duties on behalf of the executive authority of Barbados which is vested in Her Majesty.[4]

10. Barbados had its first Parliament in 1639, and without interruption has enjoyed representative government up to the present time. In the British Commonwealth, Barbados holds the honour of having the third oldest Parliament. Parliament consists of a Senate, referred to as the Upper House and a House of Assembly the Lower House.

11. The Upper House comprises twenty-one (21) appointed members who hold office until the

---

1 Excerpt taken from "Profile of Barbados" Selected Data 1987 Edition P.I. Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development.

2 ibid.

3 ibid.

4 The Constitution of Barbados 1971 Chap. VI s.63 London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd.

dissolution of Parliament, while the Lower House comprises twenty-seven (27) elected representatives.

12. Functions and power of Government are vested in the Cabinet, which is presided over by the Prime Minister. The Cabinet, which must consist of the Prime Minister and not less than five (5) members, is the principle instrument of Government policy charged with the general direction and control of the Government of Barbados.

13. The life of the legislature is five (5) years, and after the dissolution of Parliament, the Governor General must issue writs for a general election within ninety (90) days.[5]

1.3. Social Framework

14. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (hereafter referred to as the Convention) was signed on July 24, 1980, ratified by the Government of Barbados on October 16 of the same year and came into force in this country on September 3, 1981. The foundation had already been laid for the advent in Barbados of such a convention by the presence of this entrenched provision in the Barbados Constitution which states that "every person in Barbados is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, whatever his race, place of origin, political origins, colour, creed or sex ...".[6]

15. It is imperative to note from the outset that even prior to the signing of the Convention in 1980, the Government of Barbados had already established a mechanism to look after the concerns of women in this regard. In November, 1976, the Government appointed a twelve-member National Commission under the chairmanship of Miss Norma Monica Forde to enquire into and report upon the Status of Women in Barbados. The report produced by this Commission was presented to the Attorney-General and laid in the House of Assembly in September, 1978. One hundred and ninety (190) of the two hundred and twelve (212) recommendations arising, have thereinafter been implemented.

16. Moreover in 1976, the Department (now Bureau of Women's Affairs) was created to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the National Commission. The Bureau of Women's Affairs, which falls under the aegis of the Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development, was established by Government in 1979 to service the twelve member National Commission as the secretariat and to act as an intermediary between the Government and Women of Barbados. The primary function of the Bureau is to address all issues directly concerning women, and in particular it seeks to ensure that the principle of equality between men and women is complied with. The staff of the Bureau comprises a Director, Research Assistant and Typist.

17. The Elimination of Discrimination Against Women is a common concern shared not only by the Bureau of Women's Affairs, but also by many of the forty-four (44) Non-Governmental Women's Organizations with whom the Bureau is in continuous consultation, and several labour organizations which represent both male and female workers in the workplace. Furthermore, the Government of Barbados provides an annual subvention to six (6) Non-Governmental Women's organizations, including the National Organizations of Women which is the umbrella organizations for fourteen (14) such groups.

18. This concern for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is even more pronounced when consideration is given to the fact that in Barbados 43% of the households are headed by women[7], the labour force comprises 56,300 women out of a total 119,300 and that 96,400 women form more than half of the total adult population of 179,300 people[8].

---

5 ibid Chap. V Part 3. .62.

6 ibid Chap. III .11.

7 Taken from Reports of the Barbados Statistical Service.

8 Figures taken from Population and Vital Statistics of the Selected Data 1987 Edition and Barbados Statistical Services' Reports.

The population density is 587 per square kilometre, and the distribution of the population by age group is shown below:

TABLE I

Population (By Age Group)

	1980		1985	
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
TOTAL	115,771.00	128,457.00	119,530.00	134,119.00
Population By Age Groups				
O - 4	10,531.00	10,403.00	10,930.00	10,619.00
5 - 9	12,676.00	12,631.00	9,700.00	10,200.00
10 - 14	12,859.00	12,751.00	12,000.00	12,400.00
15 - 19	13,642.00	13,658.00	12,300.00	12,500.00
20 - 24	12,382.00	12,841.00	13,000.00	13,400.00
25 - 29	10,001.00	10,556.00	12,000.00	12,700.00
30 - 34	7,724.00	8,118.00	9,700.00	10,500.00
35 - 39	5,019.00	5,836.00	7,500.00	8,100.00
40 - 44	4,379.00	5,361.00	4,900.00	5,900.00
45 - 64	15,402.00	20,177.00	15,500.00	20,500.00
65 & over	11,156.00	16,125.00	12,000.00	17,300.00

Source: Barbados Statistical Service. See Appendix IV.

19. At the end of 1987, Barbados' total population was 253,881 comprising 119,975 males and 133,906 females.

1.4 Brief Financial Picture

20. In 1987, Barbados' per capita income was U.S.$ 4,592.00 which can be regarded as being very high for a small developing country.

21. The following table highlights more clearly the country's financial status, along with the contributions of tourism to the Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Tourism is, after trade and Government services, the highest single earning sector.

TABLE II

Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) - 1974 Prices

(Bds.$m.)

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
GDP at Factor Cost (incl. net indirect taxes)	1,784,218	1,898,943	2,074,583	2,180,673	2,297,284
GDP at Market Prices	1,990,013	2,112,677	2,302,778	2,409,942	2,646,019
Tourism	89.0	87.3	93.4	90.6	96.7
Real Growth (% charge)	-4.9	0.5	3.6	1.1	5.1

Source: Central Bank of Barbados.

1.5. Legal Framework

22. Since the advent of adult suffrage in 1950, women have played an active role in the political life of the country. This is manifested, for example in the fact that in the 1986 General Election, 54.3% of the voters were women[9], and that there are active women's branches of the two major political parties, namely the Democratic Labour Party Women's League and the Barbados Labour Party Women's League. This continuous political activity is assured by the Laws of Barbados which state in part that "... no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of assembly and association ..." and "... to form or belong to political parties or to form or belong to trade unions or other associations for the protection of his interests".[10] It is against this background that the ruling political party had as one of its Manifesto pledges that "women will be given greater opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes of government at all levels".[11]

23. Since Treaties and Conventions do not automatically become part of the Laws of Barbados, the provisions of the Convention cannot be invoked before and directly enforced in the law courts in Barbados. Women, however, have legal recourse to the constitution which directly protects Barbadians from discrimination.[12] In addition, legislation has been enacted which gives support to many of the articles of the Convention.

24. For those women who are employed in the public service, under Chapter 8A 2(1) it is stated that "there shall be an Ombudsman for Barbados who shall be in accordance with this Act, investigate and report upon allegations of improper, unreasonable administrative conduct." Women who have suffered discrimination as a result of improper, unreasonable or inadequate administrative conduct should have this addressed by the Ombudsman. The office of Ombudsman for Barbados was established by an Act of Parliament and an appointment was first made to the post with effect from January 1, 1987.

---

9 Taken from Data of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission.

10 The Constitution of Barbados 1971 Chap. III s. 21.

11 Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, 1986 p. 23.

12 "The Constitution of Barbados states that "no person shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority and "no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect." Chap. III s. 23. "

25. It is generally recognised that as a result of entrenched values, attitudes and behaviours, the full development and advancement of women within the context of the principle of equality is a challenging and difficult task. In Barbados, however, the Government is committed to realising this goal of equality for women. As a consequence, every available means is used to create an atmosphere conducive to the overall development of women and thus the entire nation. Legislative reform, education, the easy access to and availability of many social services and utilities, and the work of many organizations and interested individuals are but a few of the means used to promote and ensure the full development and advancement of the women of Barbados by working towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them.

PART II

26. The preamble to the constitution of Barbados declares an intention to establish and maintain a society in which *ALL PERSONS* may, to the full extent of their capacity, play a due part in the institutions of the national life. This is mirrored in Barbadian life, as Barbados for many years has enjoyed a stable and democratic process of Government in which sovereign power resides in the people as a whole, although exercised on their behalf by their elected representatives.

27. An examination will now be made of Articles 16 of the Convention, with reference to apposite constitutional, legislative, administrative or other measures which have come into force prior to or as a consequence of the Barbados Government ratifying the Convention in 1980. Each of the following Articles will now be examined.

ARTICLE I

28. In Barbados, the Constitution is the supreme law and any law inconsistent with it is decreed to be null and void to the extent of the inconsistency.[13] Also contained in the Barbados Constitution, is the provision which states that "no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect."[14] This provision is one of the determining principles upon which the Government of Barbados can promote the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. This anti-discriminatory provision, however, does not apply to laws which may be considered to be discriminatory in favour of women.

29. Two pieces of legislation which can be deemed discriminatory against women can be found in the Barbados Citizenship Act. Under section 6 of the Constitution a non Barbadian woman who marries a Barbadian male can register as a citizen of Barbados, however a non Barbadian male who marries a Barbadian woman does not qualify for citizenship.[15] He may apply for permanent resident status. Further a child born in wedlock outside of Barbados to a Barbadian father is a citizen of Barbados by decent, however a child born in wedlock to a non Barbadian father and a Barbadian mother is not a Barbadian citizen.[16] Such a child is only entitled to permanent resident status under Section 5(2c) of the Immigration Act, 1979; this does not entitle the recipient to hold a Barbados Passport. A child born to a Barbadian mother out of wedlock is a Barbadian citizen.

30. Inasmuch as the Laws of Barbados may be subject to change in areas which are discriminatory against women, no specific provisions are made for the law courts to impose penalties on any person, or group of persons, who may be found guilty of discriminating against women. However, the

---

13 ibid. Chap. I 5.1.

14 op. cit. Chap. III s.23.

15 Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Barbados 1978 p. 98 para. 184.

16 ibid. p. 97 para 180.

Constitution of Barbados does make provisions for all Barbadians who may be discriminated against on grounds of race, place or origin, political opinions, colour or creed[17] to apply to the High Court for redress.[18] On the basis of these and other related laws, persons can also apply to the High Court for redress against wrongful dismissal. One recent case tried in the High Court saw a 28-year-old woman suing her former employee for wrongfully dismissing her for wearing her hair in braids. The plaintiff was subsequently awarded the sum of $2,000.00 for winning the case.[19]

ARTICLES 2 & 3

31. The Barbados Constitution from sections 11 - 27 makes the provision for the "Protection of the Fundamental Rights and Freedom of the Individual" which guarantees to every Barbadian, basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. Included in sections 11 - 27 of the Barbados Constitution are freedom of conscience and expression, rights to life, liberty and the enjoyment of property.

32. The Government of Barbados, in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention provides this constitutional guarantee which enables a woman who is deprived of her constitutional rights the opportunity to apply to the High Court for redress.[20] Moreover this constitutional provision guarantees women the full exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

33. Women, as well as men, can apply for legal aid in claiming cases as set out in the Laws of Barbados. A Legal Aid Scheme, administered by the Welfare Department of Barbados, also assists women in family disputes such as divorce settlements, maintenance in marital and other unions, denials of paternity and land disputes.[21] The Community Legal Services Act[22] is the legislation governing this Scheme through a body corporate known as the Community Legal Services Commission.[23]

ARTICLE 4

34. The 1976 National Commission on the Status of Women was one temporary special measure instituted to accelerate women's equality. The Commission was empowered to inquire into and report upon:-

(a) the citizenship and immigration laws, policies and practices so far as they affect women;

(b) the position of women in the civil and criminal laws especially the laws governing matrimonial property, marriage and divorce;

(c) income tax and estate and succession duty legislation in so far as the same affects women;

(d) labour laws in their application to women and the role of women in the labour force of the island;

(e) the employment, placing and promotion of women in the public service and in the private sector;

(f) the cultural and historical attitudes which lead to discrimination and prejudice against

---

17 The Constitution of Barbados Chap. III. s. 23.

18 ibid. Chap. III. s. 24.

19 Weekend Nation 26th May, 1989 - "Ingrid Holds Her Head Up In Victory". The Nation Publishing Co. Ltd.

20 The Constitution of Barbados Chap. III. 5.24 op. cit.

21 Taken from the Report of the Welfare Dapartment of the period October 1988 to December inclusive.

22 The Laws of Bardabod Chap. 139A.

23 Forde, Norma M. - "Where Are We Now?" An Assessment of the Status of Women in Barbados, Bridgetown: Government Printing Department P. 13.

women making it difficult for them to realise their full potential;

(g) the mental and physical health of women, including all aspects of family planning and its application to women;

(h) education, including the availability of education for girls and women at all levels of the educational system;

(i) the one-parent family with special reference to women's roles therein;

(j) laws and practices concerning the political rights of women;

(k) and such other matters in relation to the status of women in Barbados as may appear to the Commissioners to be relevant.

35. The Commission comprised members with varied disciplines (see Appendix III) and executed its work through research of the members themselves, memoranda, background papers requested from knowledgeable people, public hearings, meetings and interviews with members of the public and assistance generally from persons in the community. There were fourteen (14) public hearings as well as meetings with eleven men and women's organizations.

36. The information and 212 recommendations in the Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women served as the basis upon which a "greater move towards equal rights for men and women" could be implemented.

37. The Bureau of Women's Affairs was therefore established to monitor the recommendations made by the National Commission and to ensure that these were implemented. In enforcing the measures which were recommended by the National Commission, the Bureau continues to monitor generally the situation relating to women and to make recommendations concerning matters which affect women.[24]

ARTICLE 5

38. As the elimination of sex stereotyping is a continuous and slow process which involves all sectors of the society, measures with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudice and customary practices are intricately interwoven, as prejudices permeate all boundaries. The Commissioners in the National Commission on the Status of Women examined the issue of sex stereotyping with particular reference to the media.

39. The school as an institution, is one of the socialising agents used to inculcate values and attitudes in young people. Among other things, the Government of Barbados introduced co-education in the secondary school system. "A positive result of this is that the teaching staff is mixed (men and women) physical facilities in the majority,of schools are now available equally to both girls and boys the teaching of home economics, agriculture and technical subjects, to both girls and boys, has been increased in secondary schools...".[25]

40. Much attention has been placed on one of the subtle forms of cultural practices, based on the idea of the superiority or inferiority of either of the sexes, which extends to the exploitation of women through violence against them. The Bureau of Women's Affairs has initiated research and published a small study entitled "Physical Violence Against Women in Barbados 1977 - 1985" the findings of which were presented at a Seminar to an audience including representatives from Government, many Women's Organizations and the News Media. A pamphlet on "Myths and Facts About Battered Women" has also been published by the Bureau of Women's Affairs.

---

24 Gillings, Scarlette I, 1987 Review of the Barbados Women's Bureau.

25 Forde, N.M. "Where Are We Now?" p. 14.

41. Other institutions have initiated programmes to suppress violence against women and by so doing seek to modify this social and cultural pattern of conduct. A new organization, Women Against Rape (WAR) was formed in 1986 to address the problems of physical abuse against women and to ensure that the criminal justice system operates to its fullest. Women Against Rape (WAR) advertises daily in the press to raise the consciousness of the community on the dangers of rape. The Business and Professional Women's Club, a non-governmental women's organization and instrumental in establishing a Rape Crisis Centre and telephone hotline in July, 1986 - this provides counselling and support to rape victims and their families.

42. The Bureau of Women's Affairs in collaboration with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) embarked on a public educational and awareness programme. Funds from the CIM were used to finance the publishing of various pamphlets related to women and the law, for example:

- "My Question on Child Support"
- "Aspects of Family Laws for Barbadians"
- "What Are My Property Rights?"
- "My Questions On Divorce."

43. Funds were also used for the television productions relating to the series on "Women and the Law."

44. In Barbados, family life education has not been incorporated into the schools' educational programme. However, the Parent Education For Development in Barbados (PAREDOS) is a voluntary organization conducting programmes in parent education with the objective of assisting parents in coping with problems related to child rearing. PAREDOS was started in 1972 and developed our concern for the existing state of parenting when many Barbadian parents were emigrating to Europe and North America and leaving young children to be cared for by other family members and friends.

PAREDOS emphasises the responsibility of both men and women in the development of their children's lives, but operates within a climate of many single-parent homes, headed by women many of whom are often without the financial or moral support of the fathers of their children. The organization has recommended that family life education be taught in all schools with an emphasis on sexual roles and responsibilities. PAREDOS utilises the resources of the electronic and print media in its programmes. Its messages and information are therefore disseminated regionally.

45. Sex stereotyping in relation to jobs is not very prevalent, however there are still some occupations which are either male or female-dominated. For instance there are quite a few male nurses employed in the mental health field. Out of a total of 181 persons on the nursing staff, there are seventy-seven (77) male nurses and five (5) male nursing administrators.[26] Similarly there are increasing numbers of males in the secretarial and cosmetology fields. Females can be found in almost any field possible and are grasping the educational opportunities available to become qualified in what were thought to be male-oriented technical areas.

ARTICLE 6

46. Under the Vagrancy Act, Chapter 156 section 2 of the Laws of Barbados "any person who being a common prostitute or nightwalker, loiters in any street or highway and importunes passengers for the purpose of prostitution ... shall be liable on conviction before a magistrate to a penalty ...."

47. Under these circumstances, prostitution is therefore illegal in Barbados. Prostitutes can also be charged and arrested for violations under the Offences Against the Person Act. However, measures have not been introduced to deal with prostitution especially. In some instances, prostitutes are brought into the country from other countries, especially South America, but are subsequently deported by Immigration authorities.

---

26 Statistics taken from Records of the Psychiatric Hospital.

48. Emphasis has been placed on the other forms of exploitation of women, namely forms of physical violence, which have been dealt with under Article 5.

ARTICLE 7

49. In Barbados, not enough women have been appointed, recommended or given the opportunity participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof nor to hold public offi and perform all public functions at all levels of government. The composition of Board, Commissions ar Statutory Corporations reveal a distinct male bais as illustrated in the following table compiled from tl "Public Service Staff List - revised to 31st December, 1987".

TABLE 3

Boards, Commissions etc.	Male	Female
Barbados Development Bank	7	1
Central Bank Board of Directors	6	0
Barbados National Bank	10	1
Board of Directors of the Insurance Corporation of Barbados	5	2
Income Tax Appeal Board	5	0
Land Valuation Board	5	0
Land Tax Relief Board	7	0
Board of Directors of the Barbados Mortgage Finance Co. Ltd.	4	0
National Petroleum Corporation	12	0
Medical Council	9	0
National Insurance Board	9	0
Electoral and Boundaries Commission	5	0
Sanitation Service Authority	9	3
General Nursing Council for Barbados	2	10
Child Care Board	3	6

Source: Barbados Public Service Staff List compiled by Personnel Administration Division. See Appendix V.

50. The table above clearly illustrates that women only have majority membership in Boards and Commissions which traditionally have female - dominated occupations, for example, nursing and child care. Likewise, females have never been appointed to serve in high-level public offices like Speaker of the House of Assembly, President of the Senate, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister not Governor-General.

51. Since 1951, women as well as men have had the same right to vote in all elections and have been eligible for election to all elected bodies. In 1944, the first female participated actively in politics by contesting the Bridgetown Seat for the House of Assembly. Since 1951, when adult suffrage was

effected, only four women have been elected to the House of Assembly. Senator Billie Miller has the distinction of being the first and only female Minister of Government, serving in the capacity of Minister of Health and National Insurance and subsequently Minister of Education and Culture during her ten year tenure - 1976 - 1986.

52. There are no legal barriers to women's participation in politics in Barbados since adult suffrage was effected in 1951. However few women come forward for elective office. On February 13, 1988, a National Seminar, funded by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and organized by the Bureau of Women's Affairs was held to formulate strategies to increase the participation of women in politics and to identify the sources of obstacles which hinder the presence of more women at higher-level decision-making positions. The Seminar took the form of a panel discussion, group workshop and plenary session and was attended by participants from non-governmental women's organizations, the women's branches of the major political parties, youth groups, and individuals who were or are actively involved in politics in Barbados.

53. The Seminar stressed the need for more women encouraged to declare their candidature in the political sphere and address the existing imbalance between the sexes. Women in Barbados seem more inclined to display their allegiance to political parties by attending political meetings, voting and becoming members of the parties themselves or their respective women's branches. The two active women's branches of the two major political parties are the Barbados Labour Party Women's League and the Democratic Labour Party Women's League. Women serve on the Executive Councils of both parties and have been elected to the posts of vice-chairman and 1st vice president. In 1986, four women were appointed to the Senate.

54. The following statistics reveal the voting pattern from 1951 - 1986:

TABLE 4

	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971	1976	1986
Total Registered Voters	95,939	103,290	104,518	99,999	Note 2	134,240	176,739
Females	55,216	60,304	61,176	Note 1	Note 1	Note 1	94,805
Males	40,723	42,980	43,342	Note 1	Note 1	Note 1	81,805
Total Who Voted	62,020	62,274	64,090		79,258	99,413	135,562
Females	31,732	33,429	35,231	42,381	99,463	54,460	73,930
Males	30,288	42,980	43,381			46,003	61,930

Source: Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Barbados.

Note 1: From 1966 - 1976 no breakdown in sex in registration.
Note 2: There are no figures for 1971 because returning officers of four constituencies did not give a breakdown of voters by sex.

ARTICLE 8

55. The Diplomatic and Consular representatives of the Government of Barbados are usually mer although there has been a slight improvement from 1975 when for the first time, a woman attaine Ambassadorial rank as Barbados' High Commissioner to Canada and in 1986 when a female was appointe Consul-General to Canada. Barbados' Permanent representative to the United Nations General Assembl Her Excellency Dame Nita Barrow also serves as diplomatic representative to Bermuda, Cuba, Th Dominican Republic and Haiti. At the level of Heads of Missions, Barbados is represented abroad by eigh men and one woman in diplomatic service and one woman and one man in Consular capacity.

56. Barbados has been represented by men as well as women in the International and Regional fora on the issue of Women's Affairs. Delegations have participated in many seminars and conferences including the Regional Plan of Action For The Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Plan of Action of the Inter-American Commission of Women, the First, Second, Third and Fourth Caribbean Community Secretariat's Ministers with Responsibility for the Integration of Women In Development, the Mid-Decade Conference in Copenhagen and the End of the Decade Conference in Nairobi. However, with regard to representation at international meetings on other issues, the inclusion of Barbadian women in high-level delegations still needs to be given serious consideration by the Government of Barbados.

ARTICLE 9

57. The Barbados Citizenship Act is one where differences in sex play a very significant role. The sexual discriminatory factor which exists in this Act affects not only women, but men as well. Therefore it is difficult to 'conclude whether women do or do not have equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality.

58. Firstly, a female non-citizen married to a male Barbadian citizen is eligible for citizenship, however a male non-citizen married to a female citizen is not entitled to the same privilege. A male non-citizen married to a female citizen is entitled to permanent residency but not citizenship.

59. A person's citizenship is determined by birth, descent and registration, however it is the citizenship of the male patent which is the determining factor where the parents are married, but the citizenship of the female parent which alone counts where the child is born out of wedlock.

60. In both instances, males and females are discriminated against, however the discrimination against males is most evident. The attainment of citizenship while married to a female citizen and the transmission of Barbadian citizenship by descent from a mother to a child born out of wedlock clearly suggests this. Consequently children of a female citizen who is married to a non-citizen will not be entitled to citizenship by descent, if not born in Barbados. Further, these children cannot be entitled to the same rights as those born in the country, for example, they cannot be entitled to free education.

61. Women do share equal rights with men as they pertain to travel. Women can obtain their own passports and can travel without their husbands' permission.

62. Children can travel on either the mother's or father's passport, without consent being required from either parent. Also, consent is not needed from the father for the mother to take the children out of the country.

ARTICLE 10

63. The Government of Barbados recognises the importance of education as an instrument of social and economic development and commits twenty per cent (20%) of its national budget to education. Such an investment has led to a high level and quality of education among Barbadians with a literacy rate of approximately ninety per cent (90%). There is equal access to education and the policy of the Government is that education should be co-educational and compulsory up to the age of sixteen and free at the primary, secondary schools remain in Barbados. There are a few private single-sexed secondary schools.

64. The curricula in the single-sexed schools are structured similarly to those in the co-educational schools. In fact, both categories of schools are exposed to the same high quality of education. All Government and private secondary schools take the same formal examinations which are administered by the Caribbean Examinations Council, which is a Regional Board, and the General Certificate of Education, an external board. As a result, similar facilities exist at all schools.

65. Consequently, girls and boys in all schools have the opportunity to pursue subjects which were traditionally sex stereotyped. At the junior levels at secondary school, boys study subjects such as

Home Economics and Needlework, while girls pursue Woodwork, Metalwork and Technical Drawing. At the senior levels, girls are encouraged to continue pursuing traditionally "male-oriented" studies. Girls and boys also have the same opportunities to participate in sports and physical opportunities in the schools. Table 5 shows the % of females enrolled in (selected) traditionally "male" studies in two (2) tertiary institutions.

TABLE 5 (i)

Barbados Community College (1986 - 87)

FIELD OF STUDY	% of Females
Commerce	
Accountancy	63
Business Studies	81
Computer Studies	53
Health Sciences	
Inspection of Meat	25
Medical Laboratory Technology	70
Public Health Inspection	50
Technology	
Building & Civil Engineering	9
Mechanical & Electrical Engineering	7

TABLE 5 (ii)

Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic*

	% of Females		
	1983-4	1985-6	1986-7
FIELD OF STUDY			
Electronics	4.3	7.9	7.0
Tailoring	47.8	87.5	78.3
Mechanical Engineering	3.8	5.7	5.0
Agriculture	8.8	14.1	18.6
Electronic Installation	2.1	9.1	8.8

*No statistics available for academic year 1984-5.

66. The Barbados Government offers a number of scholarships and exhibitions to students at the secondary and tertiary levels. Students with good grades in studies taken at General Certificate of Education 'A' Level are awarded scholarships and exhibitions. These awards are therefore decided on basis of academic performance of the students and obliterates any chance of sexual discrimination.

67. Along with the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, there are other institutions which offer adult and continuing education. Emphasis is placed on catering for adults who need to complete some aspect of their education, make-up qualifications required for certain jobs and gain new skills.

68. The Polytechnic offers courses which prepare persons for entry to the Barbados Community

College as well as Industry, it offers two-year practical courses for operatives and short ad hoc courses to meet specific industrial needs. The Extra-Mural Department, which is the community-based arm of the University of the West Indies offers General Certificate of Education Courses at 'O' Level and Special Interest Non-Examination Courses in areas such as Secretarial Practice, Journalism, Company Law for Businessmen and Effective Public Relations; the latter courses are sometimes co-ordinated with other non-training agencies e.g. businesses.

69. In addition, there are a number of private institutions around the island offering courses to meet the specific needs of the job market, for example, computer studies, secretarial studies, business studies and customs procedures.

70. The large number of opportunities available for continuing education, does not, however, reflect the dropout rates for girls or boys in schools. Since pregnancy is the major cause of girls and women discontinuing their education, they are offered the option of returning to school to complete their education after having the child. Consequently, the drop-out rates are very low, almost negligible. It must be stressed here that education in Barbados is compulsory up to the age of sixteen years and a parent or guardian can be prosecuted under the law for not permitting a child to attend school.

71. In the realm of teaching, women definitely predominate the field. Approximately 76% of all teachers at the primary level are women, with about 61% of the secondary school teachers being women.

72. In the 1985 - 86 academic year, there were 1,090 female teachers out of a total the primary level and 643 females out of a total 1,171 at the secondary level. Again in the 1986 - 87 academic year, there were 1,129 females out of a total 1,489 at the primary level, while at the secondary level, there were 635 females out of a total 1,146. Therefore, by 1987, Females comprised about 66.6% of the entire teaching service.

73. In relation to the percentage of women employed as school principals and heads of departments in schools, there is some deviation from the general statistics. 57.1% of government-assisted private secondary schools are headed by women, while 38.1% of the other government secondary schools are headed by women. Males and females share equally the roles of heads of departments within schools.

74. Finally, all women have access to free family life education which is provided through the work of the Barbados Family Planning Association. The Association also offers free health education and family planning services to all men and women in the country, including contraceptives and sterilisation procedures. The Association just recently embarked on a programme which was geared mainly for industrial workers; it incorporated family life and health education with the distribution of contraceptives on factory sites. It must be stressed here that industrial workers consist of a very high percentage of women and are therefore a very focal group.

ARTICLE 11

75. Since 1967 Barbados has held membership in the International Labour Organization (ILO) and has ratified ILO Conventions concerning equal remuneration for male and female workers for work of equal value and discrimination in employment. In addition the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act of 1977 safeguards the rights of persons in the labour force regardless of sex.

76. However there is no specific legislation on discrimination, yet legal provisions to eliminate discrimination are embodied in the Constitution as was examined in Articles II and III.

77. The main facility for enforcing the existing provisions to eliminate discrimination against women in employment is the Legal Aid Scheme.[27]

---

[27] See Articles II and III. The Legal Aid Project was funded by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS) from 1982 to 1988.

78. At 1986, there were approximately 116,900 persons in the labour force and of those, an estimated 55,300 were women[28]. Out of a total 3,500 persons employed as administrative and managerial workers in Barbados, there were approximately 1,000 women[29]. At present in the Public Service, where there are 2,943 females employed out of a total 6,896 workers in the public sector - there are only two (2) Deputy Permanent Secretaries, four (4) Senior Administrative Officers and ten (10) Heads of Departments who are females. The latter statistics represent approximately 0.029%, 0.058% and 0.145% of the total public sector workforce for the three respective positions. There has only been one female employed in the position of Permanent secretary, which is the highest administrative position in the Public Service[30]

79. In the private sector, the tradition had been that women would be employed moreso as shop assistants, clerks, and secretaries, while the men were supervisors and managers. Now more women are employed in administrative positions in banks, insurance companies and business houses. More women have the required professional and technical skills and are therefore able to move into non-traditional areas and positions of authority[31]. Hence, the tendency for any profession to be filled predominantly by men or women is based on custom and social practices and not by law.

80. For those women who prefer to stay at home as housewives, the work carried out by them at home is not counted as part of the work done in the labour force.

81. Unremunerated agricultural work is not counted as part of the country's Gross Domestic Product (G.D.P.) i.e. if a person is involved merelyin 'kitchen gardening' for subsistence use. However if a person is registered as a small farmer (owning less than one hundred (100) acres) or as one operating on a large-scale or as an agro-industrialist involved in marketing of produce, then that person's contribution is counted as part of the Gross Domestic Product.

82. The National Insurance and Social Security Scheme makes provisions for all employed people between the ages of 16 and 65, hence women have the same rights as men to all the benefits administered under the Scheme. For example, retirement and pension benefits are paid to ALL persons who have retired at age 60 or have reached the compulsory age of 65. The quantum of pension depends on the number of contributions made to the Scheme by the insured person and the amount of insurable earnings[32]. The Scheme provides for the payment of invalidity benefits as well.

83. An unemployment benefit i t is provided for under the Scheme and is payable to persons who "work regularly but who have had an interruption of earnings from their employment, or have been laid of f and have suspension of earnings from their employment or were kept on short time and suffer loss of earnings from their employment ."[33]

84. Dismissal of women on the grounds of pregnancy, maternity leave or marital status is prohibited by law and policy, however this may occur in practice sometimes. To this end women may seek redress under the law through the judicial system and at the same time apply for unemployment benefits as long as the correct number of insurance contributions have been made to the Scheme.

85. Women therefore have the right to maternity leave without loss of employment, seniority rights, decrease in remuneration or social allowances. The Employment of Women (Maternity Leave Act) which came into force in 1976, provides that every woman be granted twelve (12) weeks maternity leave in addition to her annual holiday with pay. The National Insurance Scheme provides a maternity

---

28 Statistics taken from Selected Data 1987 edition.

29 Statistics taken from "Labour Market Information Report 1987" of the Ministry of Employment, Lanour Relations and Community Development.

30 Information prepared by the Personnel Administration Division of the Barbados Public Service.

31 Forde Norma M., "Where Are We Now?"

32 Taken from "Memorandum on Benefits Payable" prepared by the National Insurance Department.

33 Excerpt from "know Your Benefits - Barbados National Insurance and Social Security Scheme", a publication of the National Insurance Board.

benefit for all employed women who have paid the requisite number of contributions and a maternity grant to uninsured women, women who are insured but who do not satisfy the contribution conditions for the benefit and unemployed women, whose spouses are insured and have paid the requisite number of contributions.

86. The safety and health of women in the workplace is provided for under the Factories Act[34]. This Act, along with the Shops Act, addresses the important areas of environmental protection, rest room and sanitary facilities and women's involvement in the workplace in extra-hazardous activities. Section 8(1) states in part "... that any factory is in such a condition or is so constructed or placed that any process of work carried on therein or intended to be carried on therein cannot be so carried on with due regard to the safety, health and welfare of the persons employed, the court shall ... prohibit the use of that part of the ways, works, machinery or plant ....or prohibit the use of the factory ... until such works have been executed as are in the opinion of the court necessary to remove the danger."

87. Adequate child care facilities are available in Barbados for working mothers. The Child Care Board Act 1981 governs the provision and maintenance of Child Care Centres for children in need of care and protection, which includes Day Care Centres. Day Care is provided for children between birth and 5 years, the latter being the age of compulsory education. The Barbados Government is the major operator of Day Care Centres and provides care for approximately 1,100 children while private enterprise caters for approximately 800 children.

88. Day Care Centres usually operate between the hours of 7.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., however a member of staff may remain on the premises to accommodate any children who cannot be picked up by parents before the Centre closes.

In some cases, especially in private Day Care Centres, an additional fee is charged. A similar procedure exists when school age children are left at school after closing time, however no additional fee is charged.

89. Nursing breaks for breast feeding mothers are not required by law, since Day Nurseries and Day Care Centres are not located at the workplace. In a survey carried out by the Child Care Board, Barbadian mothers agreed that they did not prefer having their children too close, as this might prove too distracting to their work.

ARTICLE 12

Equal access to health services and the provision of appropriate anti-natal services are highlighted in Article 12 of the Convention.

90. The provision of adequate health care and services has always been a priority for the Government of Barbados. In the 1987 - 1988 Budgetary Proposals, health received the second largest financial allocation . Health Centres are located throughout the urban and rural areas in Barbados, and each of the eleven parishes has at least one out-patient clinic. There are eight (8) Polyclinics strategically placed which provides many services including Child Health Programmes, Family Planning, Dental, Adolescent and General Medical Care Clinics. Immunisation services and advice on nutrition are also available.

91. Hospitalisation is made available through a hospital network which includes the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (600 bed capacity) and six (6) District Hospitals along with a Geriatric and a Psychiatric Hospital. In addition to these hospitals which are administered by the Government of Barbados, private hospitals also offer surgical and general medical care. Until its recent closure, the St. Joseph Hospital

---

34 The Laws of Barbados Chap. 347 Section 14 states that a "woman shall not clean any part of any machinery ... if the cleaning thereof would expose the woman to risk of injury from any moving part either of that machinery ... " Section 21 states that "there shall be provided and maintained for the use of all female workers in a factory whose work is done standing, suitable facilities for sitting sufficient to enable them to take advantage of any opportunities for resting which may occur in the course of their employment". Section 26(2) states that "sufficient and suitable sanitary conveniences for all persons employed in every factory shall be provided, maintained and kept clean ...".

also provided private hospitalisation services. The recently re-opened Diagnostic Hospital and Clinic also provides private medical and ancillary services. The Government of Barbados has negotiated with the owners of the former for the purchase of this hospital with the view of re-activating its services.

92. The following table indicates the numbers of health personnel with population ratio, 1982 - 86:

TABLE 6

CATEGORY	1982		1983		1984		1985		1986	
	Total	Persons To each	Total	Persons To each	Total	Persons To each	Total	Persons To each	Total	Persons To each
Doctors	221	1333	213	1180	220	1145	224	1132	243	1045
Dentists	30	8346	25	10050	25	10050	30	8455	30	8461
Social Workers	6	41732	64	1873	6	42000	6	42275	6	42306
Nutritionists	9	27821	9	27915	9	28000	9	28183	10	25384
Nurses/midwives	546	459	519	484	537	469	555	459	583	435
Public Health Nurses	46	5443	55	4568	54	4667	52	4878	55	4615
Psychiatric Nurses	155	1615	170	1478	169	1491	146	1737	154	1648
Midwives only	36	6955	40	6281	31	8129	8129	30	8455	8188
Nursing Assistants (trained)	303	826	303	829	317	795	313	810	336	755
Dispensers	109	2297	111	2263	14	2210	114	2225	122	2081
Occupational Therapists	3	83464	2	125620	2	126000	2	126824	3	84613
Dental Auxiliaries	12	20866	13	19326	13	19385	13	19511	14	18131

Source: Barbados Statistical Service.

93. In 1980, life expectancy for women in Barbados was 75.21 years as compared with 70.17 years for men. Women traditionally outlive men in Barbados. Noting this and the growing number of elderly persons in the community, the National Commission on the Status of Women recommended among other things, a community aid scheme to train and employ men and women to take care of the elderly. This has been effected through the Home Help Scheme where trained personnel work to care for the elderly in the community.

94. The following tables indicate the female birth and death rates for the period 1982 - 1987, along with other vital statistics:

TABLE 7

Year	Birth Rate per 1000	Death Rat per 1000	Rate of Natural Increases	Infant Mortality per 1000 births	Population Growth Rate (%)	Total Population
1982	17.8	8.0	9.8	13.5	0.2	251.2
1983	17.9	8.2	9.7	24.5	0.4	251.8
1984	16.7	7.8	8.9	18.4	0.3	252.5
1985	16.9	8.4	8.4	17.5	0.2	253.0
1986	16.1	8.2	7.9	18.3	0.2	253.5
1987	15.1	8.0	7.1	22.4	0.08	253.7

Source: Barbados Statistical Service .

95. The Bureau of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Health have been and are working together to alert the public on the preventative measures which can be used in the detection of cervical cancer - this being one of the leading causes of death in Barbadian women. The Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners (BAMP) also educates the public on health related issues by way of the electronic and print media. The focus recently has been on **AIDS (Acquired Inmune Deficiency Syndrome)**

96. The Barbados Family Planning Association continues to provide a valuable service in sex and family life education and birth control measures. Both single and married women have the right to decide on whether to utilise the readily available health care facilities including family planning service . However, Barbados like other Third World countries still suffers from a high rate of teenage pregnancies. National councils and other specialised associations include the Diabetic Association, the Cancer Society, the Heart Foundation and the National Council on The Aged.

97. The 1983 Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act enables women to legally terminate their pregnancies by a Medical Practitioner under certain specified conditions which include among other things, that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman or that the pregnancy was caused by an act of rape or incest.

98. Barbadians of both sexes enjoy equal access to *ALL* health services.

ARTICLE 13

99. Article 13 seeks to ensure that women have equal access to loans, mortgages, financial credit, recreational activities, family benefits and all aspects of cultural life.

100. There are no legal restrictions which prohibit Barbadian women from having equal access with men to bank loans, mortgages or any other form of financial credit. The requirement for collateral by some financial institutions is applicable to both men and women on equal terms. Loans and other forms of financial credit are secured from commercial banks, finance companies, credit unions and other financial institutions. Although the decision to lend is ultimately discretionary with the proviso that the lending institutions stay within the ambit of the law and abide by the rules and regulations of their organizations, women would become beneficiaries in the lending process. Moreover, Women In Development (WID), a Non-Governmental Organization in Barbados has developed a loan programme for women which offers a maximum of Bds.$15,000.00 for small business entrepreneurs. Between January, 1986 and June, 1987, one hundred and seventy-five (175) loans were requested from WID and of those, ninety-seven (97) were approved.

101. The eligibility of married women to claim for expenses to the matrimonial home is not determined by sex, but upon certification by the party who has in fact made the payment. However, access to children's allowances by a married person has been given to the husband, unless the husband stipulates in writing that he has accorded his wife the responsibility of making this claim.

102. The Constitutional declaration "to establish and maintain a society in which ALL PERSONS *may, to the full extent of their capacity,* play a due part in the institutions of national life" *ensures that Barbadian women are* guaranteed the right to fully partake in all cultural life in Barbados and can be seen in *All* areas of dance, drama,.poetry reading and entertainment. This is clearly evident during the National Independence Festival of Creative Arts (NIFCA) where women dominate in many aspects of theatre and arts.

103. There are no legal restrictions to participating in recreational activities in Barbados hence custom has been seen to play a dominant role in this area as several sports remain single-sexed. The integration of male and female students in similar physical education programmes is beginning to redress this imbalance, but this appears to be a slow process. Cricket remains the national sport of Barbados and at the national, regional and international levels is dominated by men. Likewise, netball remains an all female domain in Barbados.

ARTICLE 14

104. The concept of an urban/rural dichotomy cannot apply to Barbados. Because of its size, topography and well-developed communication network of paved roads, bus service and favourable telephone service, it is not easy to define the rural sector.

105. The new housing patterns for both low and middle income families are further eroding the lines which separate rural and urban sectors. Also, people living in 'rural' sectors have as much access to goods and services as those of the 'urban' areas.

106. The 'urban' areas tend to be more densely populated, however the 'rural' areas can still boast of vibrant community activities. Some community groups concentrate on skills training activities which are often aimed at women and are centred around traditional skills such as sewing, crocheting and cake-icing.

ARTICLE 15

107. Under the Constitution of Barbados, "the people of Barbados affirm their belief that men and institutions remain free only when freedom is founded upon respect for moral and spiritual values and the rule of law"[35]. This prelude to the Constitution forms the basis on which women are considered equal with men under the law.

108. As a developing, democratic nation with representatives at various international fora, Barbados strives to maintain its status as a free and just society as has been acknowledged by the United Nationals. To this extent freedom and social justice are extended to both i men and women under the Constitution and as a result women have the same legal capacity as men.

109. Both as lawyers and as clients women share equal opportunities with men. As has been stated in Articles 2 and 3, a Legal Aid Scheme administered by the Welfare Department allows women to have equal access to legal services.

ARTICLE 16

110. Article 16 of the Convention focuses on the rights and responsibilities of men and women in

---

35 The prelude to the Constitution of Barbados continues to state that "the people of Barbados declare their intention to establish and maintain a society in which all persons may, to the full extent of their capacity, play a due part in the institutins of the national life".

marriage and family relations.

111. Women have the same rights as men to choose a spouse and can enter into marriage with free and full consent. The Marriage Act 1978, stipulates a minimum age below which a valid marriage cannot be contracted. The minimum age is 16 years. However, the Marriage Act does stipulate that the consent of a parent or guardian is required, if the parties involved are between the ages of sixteen and the age of majority - eighteen years; Child marriages, contracted under sixteen years of age, are therefore not legal in Barbados.

112. The Marriage Act also states that a marriage should be solemnised with the publication of banns, between the hours of 8.00 a.m. and 9.00 p.m. and with the authority of a licence or magistrate's certificate.

113. The Married Woman (Amendment) Act "changed the original Act of 1896 substantially, in three specific areas. The title has been changed to the Married Persons Act since responsibilities and liabilities are now individual when a third party is involved and mutual between the spouses. The second amendment abolishes the old principle which made a husband liable for the torts of his wife. The third gives the party to a marriage the right to sue each other in tort, with the proviso, that the court may stay the action if it is not beneficial to either party "...[36]

114. Under the Domicile Reform Act, 1979, married women in Barbados are permitted to maintain a domicile of choice and therefore cannot be forced to adopt and retain the domicile of the husband.

115. In Barbados, the dissolution of a marriage is permitted on only one ground and that is where the marriage has broken down beyond recovery. Subsequently, any children resulting from the union are provided for under the 1981 Family Law Act which clearly states that both mother and father are liable according to their financial means to maintain their children who are unmarried and under eighteen years of age. However the court also makes provision for the maintenance of children over 18 years if the child is completing its education or if the child .is physically or mentally handicapped. Also, each parent now has the right to be guardian of a child and is entitled to final custody.

116. Finally, in Barbados there is a significant number of non-marital unions existing mainly in the lower socio economic stratum. To this end "the law provides that parties who have lived together continuously for five (5) years or more being a union other than marriage can bring proceedings to court in respect of their title and rights to property".[37]

117. Children born to parents who are not married are also provided for under the 1981 Maintenance Act and "can inherit from either parent in the same way as other children once the law recognises his/her father".[38]

CONCLUSION

118. The preceding report has examined each of the 16 Articles under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women as each one pertains to Barbados.

119. The report has sought to illustrate the important legal and administrative provisions which have been established to deal with the whole question of discrimination against women.

120. Inasmuch as Barbadian women have equal rights in most pertinent areas under the law, it needs to be reiterated that the goal of eliminating ALL forms of discrimination against women is a slow and gradual process. Yet with the firm commitment of the Government of Barbados, especially through the efforts of the Bureau of Women's Affairs, the possibility of achieving this goal is indeed real.

---

36 Forde, Norma Monica, "Where Are We Now".

37 Excerpt taken from "What Are My Property Rights". A pamphlet distributed by the Bureau of Women's Affairs.

38 Excerpt from "How Can I Inherit From A Father?", Bureau of Women's Affairs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barbados National Insurance Scheme. 'Memorandum on Benefits Payable' Government Printing Department.

Bureau of Women's Affairs -

- "My Questions On Child Support"
- "How Can I Inherit From A Father?"
- "What Are My Property Rights?"
- "My Question On Divorce"
- "Facts About Women"

Child Care Board. Annual Report: April 1985 to March 1986.

Democratic Labour Party 1986 Manifesto.

Forde, Norma M. "Where Are We Now" An Assessment of the Status of Women in Barbados. Government Printing Department.

Gillings, Scarlette, I. 1987, Review of the Barbados Women's Bureau. Government Printing Department.

Ministry of Education and Culture. Report on Education in Barbados for the period 1st September, 1978 to 31st August, 1982.

Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development, 1987, Labour Market Information Report.
- Selected Data 1987 edition- Government Printing Department.

National Insurance Board - "Know Your Benefits". Government Printing Department.

Roett, Phyllis, 1986, "Day Care - Minimum Standards" . Letchworth Press Ltd.

Welfare Department, Quarterly Report October to December, 1988.
- "Ingrid Holds Her Head Up In Victory" 26th May edition of Weekend Nation Newspaper, 1989.
- The Barbados Constitution.
- The Laws of Barbados Vols. I - VII.
- The Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Barbados, 1978. Government Printing Department.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF STATISTICAL TABLES

			PAGE
TABLE I	-	Population By Age Group 1980 & 1985	6
TABLE 2	-	Real Gross Domestic Product - 1974 Prices.	7
TABLE 3	-	Sex Composition of Boards, Commissions and Statutory Boards.	12
TABLE 4	-	Voting Patterns of Barbadians By Sex.	13
TABLE 5	-	Percentage of Females Enrolled in Traditionally Male Studies.	15
TABLE 6	-	Health Personnel, with Population Ration 1982 - 1986.	19
TABLE 7	-	Population, Rates of Births, Deaths and Infant Mortality 1982 - 1987.	20

APPENDIX II

LIST OF SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS ACCOMPANYING THIS REPORT

(The list is followed by the texts of the pamphlets 1 to 7 and 9)

1. Facts About Women - Bureau of Women's Affairs (B.W.A.).
2. General Information on Women and Bureau of Women's Affairs (B.W.A.).
3. How Can I Inherit From A Father? - Bureau of Women's Affairs.
4. Know Your Benefits - Barbados National Insurance and Social Security Scheme.
5. My Question On Child Support - Bureau of Women's Affairs.
6. My Questions on Divorce - Bureau of Women's Affairs.
7. Myths and Facts About Battered Women - Bureau of Women's Affairs.
8. Physical Violence Against Women in Barbados 1977 1985 - Bureau of Women's Affairs.
9. What Are My Property Rights? - Bureau of Women's Affairs.
10. Where Are We Now? An Assessment of the Status of Women in Barbados - Bureau of Women's Affairs/Norma M. Forde.
11. Demographic Statistics:
    - End of Year Population, Births, Deaths and Vital Rates 1976 - 1987.
    - Male Adult Population and Labour Force By Activity Status.
    - Female Adult Population and Labour Force By Activity Status.
    - Employment By Major Industrial Division and Sex.

FACTS ABOUT WOMEN

Do you know

1. That just over ½ population of Barbados are women. According to the 1980 Census, the population of Barbados was 247,129 of which 52.6% were women.

2. That women have the same rights as men to conclude contracts and to acquire, administer and dispose of property.

3. That the labour force in 1983 was approximately 111,600 persons —

   51,100 were women
   60,500 were men.

4. That the highest population of working women are between 25 — 34 years of age while most UNEMPLOYED women are 15 — 24 years old.

5. That 10.9% of the unemployed are men. That 19.8% of the unemployed are women.

6. That 43% of the households are headed by women, yet over half (55%) of these have no jobs outside the home.

   This means that a large number of women have major responsibilities, yet do not have jobs to support their families.

7. That there are more women than men in clerical, sales and services type jobs, and very few women get skilled training in the jobs where there is a shortage of skilled workers.

8. That girls have equal enrolment with boys in almost all levels of education; but very few women get skilled training in the jobs where there is a shortage of skilled workers.

9. That the percentage of women in the teaching profession is higher than men.

10. That in the 1981 Elections 97,901 women were eligible to vote — that is 53.6% of eligible voters in the population.

BUREAU OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

BUREAU OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

* The Bureau of women's Affairs was established in December, 1976.

. The Bureau is a Unit of the Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development.

* Location

. Marine House, Hastings Christ Church.

* Roles and Functions

. SECRETARIAT

. Secretariat of the National Commission on the Status of Women - 1976 - 1978.

. Secretariat of the National Advisory Council on Women.

. POLICY

. Facilitates the formulation and implementation of National Policy on matters affecting women.

. ADVISORY

. Advises Government Agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations on matters of concern to and affecting women.

. LIAISON

. Provides Liaison Services to Local, Regional and International Agencies/ Organisations dealing with Women's Affairs i.e. UN Agencies, CIM/OAS, Commonwealtn Secretariat, CARICOM, CCC, UWI, Bi-lateral agencies.

Provides and receives Technical Assistance Services.

* NATIONAL POLICY

. Since 1976, successive Governments have instituted policies and programmes for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

. On October 16, 1980, Barbados ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which was proclaimed by the United Nation in 1979.

. Barbados has served on the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

. The National Development Plan 1988 - 93, articulates Government's plans for the further development of women.

* PROGRAMME

. The Bureau initiates and or participates in variety of activities to further the development and equality of women in such areas as:

. Training of women in a variety of areas including leadership.

. Public Education

. Inter-Agency Collaboration

. Project formulation and implementation in areas of Legal Aid and Income Generation.

. Strengthening of Women's Organisations and the provision of Technical Assistance Services (through Workshops, Seminars, Training Courses etc.).

. Preparation and dissemination of information on women's issues; Provision of reference services regarding women.

. Representation of the interests of Government on Policy-making bodies, Conferences, Seminars, Workshops.

. Reviews and recommends legislative and other reform measures for the elimination of discrimination against women.

X X X X X X X

* OTHER AGENCIES OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS located in Barbados.

WAND - Is the Women And Development Unit of the Extra-Mural Department of the University of the West Indies. Inaugurated August 1978. WAND serves the Region through a Caribbean Plan of Action formulated at a Regional Seminar in Jamaica in 1976.

Among its many achievements WAND has initiated the establishment of two major programmes in Barbados:

. Women's Studies Programme of the UWI and the

. Youth Programme - "People of Tomorrow".

WID Ltd. - Is the Women In Development Ltd. a non-profit organisation established January, 1979, to assist women in gaining employment and to facilitate the development of women entrepreneurs through the provision of a loan/training scheme.

This agency has greatly contributed to the business credit worthiness of women.

X X X X X X X

ACHIEVEMENTS OVER PAST 12 YEARS

- 190 of the 212 Recommendations of the Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women have been implemented. This figure includes the amendments/changes or introduction of 40 of the 46 pieces of legislative reforms recommended.
- Women have entered many non-traditional fields of employment/professions.
- Women are more credit worthy.
- More women are entering the Entreprenieurial fields (owning their own businesses).
- More women are owning their own houses.
- More women are pursuing tertiary level education.
- Women are more health conscious.
- More women are in Management in both the Public and Private Sectors.
- Not enough women are at the Political decision-making level.

HOW CAN I INHERIT FROM A FATHER?

Can I inherit from my father if he dies without making a will?

I am 14 years old and my mother's only child.

My mother is not married to my father and they have never lived together.

My father supports me through the court.

YES — **You can inherit from your father; since your father supports you through the court the law recognises him as your father.** The law provides that a child born to parents who are not married can inherit from either parent in the same way as other children once the law recognises his/her father.

My father has two other children from his marriage. will these two children be entitled to a greater share of my father's estate if he dies without making a will?

NO — **You will each be entitled to equal shares.**

Suppose my father makes a will but leaves nothing in it for me? Am I entitled to anything when he dies?

If you are under 18 when your father dies and no provision is made for you, in his will, then an application will have to be made to the court. If the court is of the opinion that your father has failed in his moral duty to make proper provision for you, the court may order that such provision be made out of your father's estate. This provision also applies to the child if physically or mentally handicapped and is unable to maintain himself or herself.

KNOW YOUR BENEFITS

(This brochure gives general guidelines only and must not be treated as a complete and accurate statement of law on any particular case)

SICKNESS

This benefit is provided for you if you are forced to be absent from work due to illness.

You qualify for a benefit if you had been employed immediately prior to the day on which incapacity commenced and not less than 7 contributions have been paid in the contribution quarter but one before the contribution quarter in which incapacity commenced.

Sickness benefit is paid weekly at the rate of 66 2/3 per cent of your average insurable earnings.

Benefit may be paid for up to 26 weeks, but in cases of prolonged illness may be extended for a further 26 weeks if you had at least 75 contributions paid in three years immediately before you became ill.

MATERNITY BENEFIT

This benefit is available to working women while they are on maternity leave.

Maternity benefit may be payable for a period of 12 weeks. Payments start not earlier than 6 weeks before the expected date of confinement and continue for a period of 12 weeks, or for a period of 6 weeks after the date of confinement – whichever period ends last.

In order to qualify for benefit you must be insured for twenty-six weeks and have at least 16 contributions paid in the two contribution quarters but one before the contribution quarter in which you become eligible for benefit.

Maternity benefit is at the rate of 100 per cent of your average insurable weekly earnings.

MATERNITY GRANT

This is a lump sum payment of $250.00. It is provided for women who do not satisfy the contribution conditions for maternity benefit but who have had a confinement. A woman qualifies for the grant if her spouse was insured as an insured person for more than 26 weeks before her confinement and that not less than 16 contributions had been paid by him in the two contribution quarters but one before the contribution quarter in which her confinement occurred.

EMPLOYMENT INJURY BENEFITS

Employment Injury benefits are payable to employed persons who are injured at work or who contract a disease as a result of the work they normally do.

Several types of benefit are payable under the Scheme –

Injury Benefit – is paid at the rate of 90% of your insurable earnings while you are unable to work as a result of the injury or disease;

Disablement Benefit – is payable if you lost a limb or otherwise suffered permanent bodily damage. The rate of benefit depends on the extent of your loss;

Medical Expenses – the actual expenses incurred in the treatment of the injury or disease;

A Funeral Grant of $450 – payable if death results from the injury or disease; and

Death Benefit – payable to surviving dependants of the deceased worker. The rate of this benefit 90% of the average insurable weekly earnings of the deceased.

There are no minimum contributions required to be paid for these benefits.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

In general terms it is a benefit payable to persons who work regularly but who have had an interruption of earnings from their employment, or have been laid off and have suspension of earnings from their employment or were kept on short time and suffer loss of earnings from their employment.

In order to qualify for unemployment benefit you must be between 16 and 65 years of age. You must have been insured for at least 52 weeks and must have 20 contributions paid or credited in three consecutive quarters ending with the quarter but one before the quarter in which you became unemployed. In addition at least 7 contributions must have been paid in the contribution quarter but one before the contribution quarter before you became unemployed.

The rate of benefit is 60 per cent of your average insurable weekly earnings payable for a maximum period of 26 weeks.

A condition for receiving benefit is not only that you register at the Employment Exchange where efforts will be made to place you in another job, but that you yourself try to find other employment.

PENSION BENEFITS

The Scheme provides for the payment of 4 types of pension benefits:–

(1) *Invalidity Pension* – payable if you become permanently incapable of work as a result of illness and have paid 150 contributions to the Scheme;

(2) *Old Age Contributory Pension* – payable when you have reached age 65 and have paid at least 500 contributions;

(3) *Survivors' Pension* – payable to the spouse and children of a deceased insured person who had made enough contributions to qualify for a pension at the time of his death;

(4) *Non-Contributory Old Age Pension* – payable to persons who have reached age 65 but have not qualified for either an old age contibutory or an invalidity pension, and who are not receiving a Government pension or a Social Security pension from another country.

The quantum of invalidity and old age contributory pension depends on the number of contributions made to the Scheme by the insured person and the amount of insurable earnings but the present minimum pension payable is $64 per week.

The rate of Survivors' Pension depends on the rate of Old Age Contributory Pension or Invalidity Pension which was or would have been payable to the deceased person at the time of his death.

The rate of Old Age Non-Contributory Pension is at present $52 per week.

GRANTS

Old Age Contributory, Invalidity and Survivors' Grants are payable in cases where the conditions for pension were not met, but where at least 50 contributions have been paid.

FUNERAL GRANT

A Funeral Grant of $450 is payable in respect of the death of an insured person or the death of the spouse of an insured person.

The amount of the grant is common to all insured persons and does not depend on the number or value of your contributions to the Scheme.

The grant is payable to the person who has met or is responsible for meeting the cost of the funeral expenses.

HOW TO CLAIM

The National Insurance Office has provided forms for claiming benefits from the Scheme.

If you claim a benefit you should make sure that the relevant form is used.

When you claim you should give all the particulars that are necessary - such as your National Insurance Number, National Registration Number, your date of birth and your last day of work.

IMPORTANT

If you have not already done so, please inform the National Insurance Office of your registration number on your new Barbados Identification Card.

OFFICE NOS. 436-6335/436-6350

MY QUESTION ON CHILD SUPPORT

I am 16 years old and still attend school. My mother is a single woman and I live with her. My father and mother have never lived together. My father who used to support me, now says that since I am 16 years old he does not have to support me. Is this true?

NO — **This is not true.** Under the old Act — *(Affiliation Proceeding Act)* your father would not have had to support you after you were 16 years old, but **since March, 1984 there is a new Act — Maintenance Act and the Law now clearly states that both Mother and Father are liable according to their financial means to maintain their children who are unmarried and under 18 years.**

What will happen after I am 18 years and I want to further my education?

Does the law allow for my father to continue to support me?

YES — **The court may make provision for your maintenance after you are 18 years old. However the court must be satisfied that such provision is needed.**

(a) to assist you to complete your education which includes vocational training or apprenticeship; and

(b) he can also be made to support you after you are 18 years old; or

(c) If you are physically or mentally handicapped.

Does the law specify a maximum sum per week which my father is required to pay for my maintenance?

NO — **It does not. In determining the amount of payment to be made the court will take certain things into consideration including:—**

(i) your financial needs;

(ii) the income, property and financial resources of both your mother and father;

(iii) the age and state of health of your mother and father.

MY QUESTIONS ON DIVORSE

What are the grounds for divorce?

The law provides only one ground for divorce and that is **where the marriage has broken down beyond recovery.**

If a wife files for a divorce after 5 (five) months of separation from her husband, will the court grant a divorce?

NO — the ground for divorce is established only when the court is satisfied that **the wife and husband have been separated and lived separately and apart not less than 12 months before the date on which the divorce is filed.**

Suppose a wife and husband have been separated for over 12 (twelve) months but are still living in the same house and the wife still cooks for her husband sometimes, on an application for divorce will the court treat them as having "separated and living separately and apart?"

YES — **the court may hold that the wife and husband have separated and lived separately and apart** despite the fact that they have both continued to live in the same house after the separation and the wife has done household services for him.

In granting a divorce the court makes first a "decree nisi" and after one month has passed that decree becomes absolute (final).

A decree nisi will not become absolute if the court is not satisfied that proper arrangements have been made for the welfare and custody of the children of the marriage.

When a decree nisi becomes absolute a party to the marriage may marry again.

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT BATTERED WOMEN

Domestic violence against women -- "wife abuse" -- affects millions of women of every race, class, age, and religion. Battered women are mothers, teachers, doctors, secretaries, and factory workers. They live in the city and in the country. They are rich and poor, as young as 14, and as old as 85.

Studies of violent families show that the violence escalated over time, becoming more intense and more frequent.

MYTH: "Wife abuse" occurs primarily in poor and/or minority families.

FACT: Battered women come from all race, class, age, educational, and religious backgrounds.

Domestic violence may appear to be a problem primarily of poor women because middle -- and upper-class women often have the resources to hide the violence in their lives. They tend to avoid calling the police since they can go to a hotel and a private doctor or counsellor. Abused women with fewer economic resources are more visible since they must turn to public institutions such as the police, county hospital, and community mental health clinic for help.

MYTH: Women who are beaten bring it upon themselves by nagging, being frigid, or deliberately provoking their husbands.

FACT: Time after time women report being awakened in the night by beatings. Very often they are brutally beaten for such minor infractions as burning the dinner, leaving the door open when the air conditioning is on, or arguing about what television station to watch.

Most battering husbands consider their wives to be their property and feel that they have the right, both legally and morally, to control and discipline them through the use of force. This attitude is reinforced by the police and courts, which seldom punish abusive husbands, and by society as a whole, which generally either ignores or condones the violence.

Violence is passed on from generation to generation. Children of violent parents learn that this is an acceptable way to behave and often grow up to be violent themselves.

MYTH: Women who remain with a violent husband or boyfriend are masochistic and stay because they gain satisfaction from the violence.

MYTH: There is nothing that the community can do about domestic violence. It should be left to the couple involved to work it out.

Creating an atmosphere where assaults against women are not acceptable is an important step in preventing their recurrence. Neighbourhoods and communities can do much to create such an atmosphere by bringing the subject into the open, encouraging women to talk about their experiences, and making it clear to the men involved that such violence is condemned by their neighbours and friends.

The bottom line in the issue of domestic violence is frequently the life of either the man or the woman. Assaults by men often escalate to homicide. At the same time, desperate women who have vainly sought help from various institutions sometimes kill their husbands as a final act of self-defense. These deaths can only be prevented by effective community intervention.

WHAT ARE MY PROPERTY RIGHTS

What are my property rights?

The father of my two children and I lived together continuously for 6 years but we were not married. We have now separated and he claims that all the things, including the house, that were bought during the period we lived together belong to him. Can I apply to the court to have this matter settled?

YES — You can make an application to the court. **The law provides that parties who have lived together continuously for 5 (five) years or more being a union other than marriage can bring proceedings to court in respect of their title and rights to property.**

The main problem in this matter is the house, which he bought in his own name while we were living together. He made the downpayment and paid all the installments. However, he was only able to make these payments as I paid all the bills and see to all the other expenses of the house during this time. Am I then entitled to an interest to the house?

The Court can alter the interests to the house and give you an interest if it is satisfied that it is just and fair to do so.

In considering how to alter the interest, **the court will take into account the financial contribution you made indirectly towards the purchase of the house** by seeing to all the bills and expenses of the house, while he was making the payments. The court will also take into consideration any contribution you made in your role of homemaker or parent.

APPENDIX III

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Norma Forde LL.M. (Chairman) - Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus.

Patricia Symmonds (Deputy Chairman) - Former Headmistress of a leading Secondary School, President of the Association for the Teaching of English. Miss Symmonds has a B.A. Honours degree in English from Reading University and a Postgraduate Certificate of Education from the Institute of Education, London University.

Dorothy Allsopp - Sociologist with training in Social Psychology. She has worked as a Library Assistant in Barbados and Canada, and has spent some of her career time teaching in Canada and Nigeria.

Joycelin Massiah - Director, Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) of the University of the West Indies. As a Demographer, she has worked on the Census Research Programme at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus.

Milroy Reece - Accountant with a city business firm. Former Senator in the Upper House in Parliament.

Evette Gibson - Employed with a leading Trade Union the Barbados Workers' Union. Attended a six-month course in Labour Economics.

Rev. Anthony Jemmott - Anglican Priest. A Graduate in Theology of the University of the West Indies and the United Theological College of the West Indies.

Prof. Ralph Carnegie - Professor of Law at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. A Graduate in History and Jurisprudence, the latter of Oxford University.

Joyce Holder - Former Social Worker in the Welfare Department. Holds a diploma in Social Services from Sanford Fleming College. Pursued a degree in Social Sciences while carrying out research for the Commission.

Ronald Hughes - A graduate of History. Former visiting Tutor in Caribbean History at the University of the West Indies.

Hildegarde Weekes - Former Chief Probation Officer. She served as a teacher before entering the field of Social Work.

Marjorie Blackman - Co-ordinator of the Parent Education for Development in Barbados (PAREDOS). A trained Social Worker and former Senator.

APPENDIX IV

POPULATION (BY AGE GROUP) - 1983-84, 1986-88

	1983		1984		1985		1986		1987	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
TOTAL	119,981	131,356	129,439	131,619	119,727	134,111	119,975	133,906	122,300	132,900
Age Groups										
0 - 4	10,783	10,551	10,819	10,535	10,688	10,544	10,410	10,116	10,058	9,709
5 - 9	13,255	13,013	11,814	11,464	9,936	10,305	10,155	10,448	10,404	10,635
10 - 14	13,461	13,146	12,003	11,841	11,433	11,854	11,030	11,440	11,297	11,296
15 - 19	14,273	14,073	12,392	12,282	12,133	12,375	11,889	12,168	12,181	12,094
20 - 24	13,025	13,226	13,453	13,323	12,769	13,117	12,547	12,867	12,855	12,757
25 - 29	10,456	10,883	11,983	12,359	12,107	12,730	12,143	12,695	12,438	12,624
30 - 34	8,081	8,367	9,533	10,118	10,073	10,850	10,393	11,136	10,652	11,030
35 - 39	5,347	6,010	7,454	7,847	7,851	8,486	8,206	8,966	8,407	8,771
40 - 44	4,580	5,521	4,813	5,639	5,376	6,286	5,826	6,672	5,971	6,645
45 - 64	16,100	20,786	15,033	20,851	15,520	20,454	15,625	20,472	16,002	20,597
60 & over	10,620	15,780	11,142	16,360	11,841	11,110	11,750	17,028	12,035	17,012

Source: Barbados Statistical Service.

APPENDIX V

MEMBERSHIP ON BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, ETC. BY SEX

Boards, Commissions etc.	Male	Female
Barbados Development Bank	9	1
Central Bank of Barbados	7	0
Barbados National Bank	11	2
Insurance Corporation of Barbados	-	-
Income Tax Appeal Board	5	1
Land Valuation Board	6	0
Land Tax Relief Board	6	1
Barbados Mortgage Finance Co. Ltd.	-	-
National Petroleum Corporation	8	0
Medical Council	-	-
National Insurance Board	9	1
Electoral & Boundaries Commission	-	-
Sanitation Service Authority	5	3
General Nursing Council for Barbados	-	-
Child Care Board	6	5

Source: Barbados Public Service Staff List - revised to 31st December, 1981 compiled by Personnel Administration Division.

Note: Documents 1 to 11 below, referred to in this report have not been reproduced but are available, in English, in the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs at the United Nations Office at Vienna and may be consulted in the office of the Division for the Advancement of Women:

1.	The Laws of Barbados	L.R.O. 1978
2.	Physical Violence Against Women in Barbados	1977 - 1985
3.	The Family Law Act	1981 - 29
4.	Factories Act, 1982, 1983-17	
5.	Shops Act, 1983, 1984-3	
6.	Married Women Chapter 219	CAP. 219
7.	Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act,	1983-4
8.	Vagrancy Chapter 156	CAP. 156
9.	Ombudsman Chapter 8A	CAP 8A
10.	Domicile Reform Chapter 213	CAP. 213
11.	Where are we Now? An Assessment of the Status of Women in Barbados - Bureau of Women's Affairs, 1978	